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ABSTRACT

A study of four elementary schools in one large Texas school district found that cultural norms and traditions of educational administration set boundaries within which teachers chose from a limited set of "recipes" for teaching and other activities. The two-year study, using data from interviews, documents, and daily observations of teachers and principals, examined the effects of internal school coordination on classroom organization and the usefulness of analyzing schools as loosely-coupled systems. The factors investigated included the school district's resources, federal and parental involvement, principals' activities and their supervision of classroom teaching, the grouping of students among and within schools, the annual and daily rhythms of school activities, and teachers' classroom management and instructional performance. Among the study's conclusions were (1) that the similarity of the schools' purposes and values, state funding, textbooks, other resources, and classroom features and situations meant that teachers came to share common formal and informal "recipes" for teaching activities and classroom control; (2) that principals provided the stability and flexibility needed for teachers to use these recipes; and (3) that analyzing schools as loosely-coupled systems, while not irrelevant, was not as useful as had been anticipated. (RW)

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EA 013 630

**DALLAS, TEXAS** **WASHINGTON D.C.**

# RECIPES FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOLING

## FINAL REPORT

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# CHAPTER I

## RECIPE KNOWLEDGE AND AXIAL NORMS

### RECIPE FOR DOING YOUR BEST

2 cups of good attitude
3 cups of hard work
1 1/2 cups of ambition
1/2 cup of neatness
5 tablespoons of attention
3 cups of fresh air
1 1/2 cups of sleep

Let it cook for 6 weeks and serve hot on Report Card

(obtained off the wall of a 6th grade class, PHISD)

. . . . . . . . . . . . . .

Any member born or reared within the group accepts the ready-made standardized scheme of the cultural pattern handed down to him by ancestors, teachers, and authorities as an unquestioned and unquestionable guide in all the situations which normally occur within the social world. The knowledge correlated to the cultural pattern carries its evidence in itself ---- or, rather, it is taken for granted in the absence of evidence to the contrary. It is a knowledge of trustworthy *recipes* for interpreting the social world and for handling things and men in order to obtain the best results in every situation with a minimum of effort by avoiding undesirable consequences. The recipe works, on the one hand, as a precept for actions and thus serves as a scheme of expression: whoever wants to obtain a certain result has to proceed as indicated by the recipe provided for this purpose. On the other hand, the recipe serves as a scheme of interpretation: whoever proceeds as indicated by a specific recipe is supposed to intend the correlated result. Thus it is the function of the cultural pattern to eliminate troublesome inquiries by offering ready-made directions for use, to replace truth hard to attain by comfortable truisms, and to substitute the self-explanatory for the questionable.
Alfred Schutz, The Stranger: An Essay in Social Psychology

In August teachers come to school early, dressed to work. Within a week the children will arrive in stiff new jeans and dresses. Too late then to plan, to think, to prepare: from September to June, with only fervently anticipated holidays for relief, teachers will be on stage. Now the stark concrete classroom must be transformed into an exciting, friendly environment for learning; books must be retrieved from storage, stacked and labeled; filmstrips must be ordered, buses for field trips reserved, work sheets requisitioned from central duplicating, TV sets checked for faulty reception. Plans must be coordinated with other teachers on the grade level. Class lists will be scanned for potential trouble makers. In Prairie Heights several hundred teachers (like thousands more in Texas and beyond) are performing similar essential tasks according to tried and true recipes. How these recipes, and their counterparts in principals' and administrators' offices, and the provisions provided shape the organization of classrooms and schools and are used to direct the everyday work of bureaucrats and teachers is the subject of this report.

For this is the story of how elementary classrooms are organized and teacher work accomplished through the situationally relevent actualizations - recipes - sometimes derived from, sometimes justified in terms of, almost always congruent with certain institutional norms. We examine by what rules the elements that compose teacher work arise, how premises set (prescriptions) and materials supplied limit the organizational contours of the classroom and limit discretion.

Recipe knowledge serves as the basis for action in situations; fundamentally recipes tell us how to do something, not why it should be done. Recipes have a presumptive legitimacy; that is, disagreements do not arise about the recipe but most often about its specific situational application. Recipes have a logical relationship to a set of "givens"--given that you want this outcome, here is what you must do. The givens are typically taken for granted, but rooted in axial norms of the culture generally, and specifically the institutional world actors believe they inhabit. The primary knowledge of society, and its institutions is on this level--an assemblage of maxims, plans of action, stories--that serve as recipes or guides to actions in situations. "Such knowledge constitutes the motivating dynamics of institutionalized conduct. It defines the institutionalized areas of conduct and designates all situations falling within them. It defines and constructs the roles to be played in the context of the institution in question."[1] Recipes have at their base institutional norms.

Institutional norms can be seen to be general, yet fairly comprehensive reference frames for action. Their generality makes them applicable in a wide variety of situations both as guides to plan from, and as *ex post facto* rationalizations for action. Their comprehensiveness stems from the amount of activity they harness toward their general ends; that is, many different people act in the name of, or in reference to the normative structure. They cast their intended actions and their already taken actions in terms which align them with the norms; they use the norms to justify or legitimate the plans they make and the actions they take. Stated another way, the recipes are action guides situationally specific, contexted by the taken-for granted institutional norms. Institutional norms set the boundaries around what is thought to be legitimate action.

Those in the actual situations must figure out how to proceed and which recipes to apply ; they must establish a working consensus about what is to be done.[2] Since recipes apply to situations, they are necessarily positional. That is, recipes that work in one situation may not be relevant in another; positionally this means that members of an institutional hierarchy can have different recipes they use justified by the same institutional norms. Actors within an institutional framework can thus share a common perspective to bring to situations without sharing a mode of action. The institutional norms allow them to specify the definitional elements of the situation and give them something to frame and thus talk about, but then they must formulate plans of action that are contingent on the interplay of the situation, the actors involved, and the axial norms. As a result institutional norms or reference frames can have very different action plans attached to them at different levels of the institutional structure; in fact, the norms can have different definitions at the varying levels.

Education, as an institution, exhibits all of these characteristics. Two axial principles frame actions to be taken: cultural reproduction and equity. They form the basis for actions taken at the highest, intermediate, and lowest levels of the institution, and actions taken are discussed, legitimated, in reference to them. However, the specific recipes used as means for achieving results under their umbrella are quite different at varying levels of the institution, just as the situations members face differ. Commissioners of Education inhabit a different institutional realm than teachers in a classroom, or administrators in a central office. Yet all share allegiance to these general norms to the point of not just talking about them, but acting upon them. Actors at each succeeding level must perform differently because their recipes are designed to get the job done situationally. Those at the top of the educational apparatus set in motion through their recipes factors which impact at lower levels, that set the context for action and limit choices at the lower levels but do not dictate it.[3]

In an imaginary institutional system where those at the top not only set premises but also situation specific courses of action, strict control over actions might be possible. For education, this would mean that strict control would be exerted over instructional activities (the production process) which influence student (educational) outcomes. Despite periodic attempts to intensify accountablility in instructional activities, two major obstacles militate against tight controls:

> First, close supervision of instructional activity and outputs can uncover inconsistencies and inefficiencies and can create more uncertainty than mere abstract and unenforced demands for conformity to bureaucratic rules. Second, in the United States centralized governmental and professional controls are weak. Schools depend heavily on local funding and support. Maintaining only nominal central control over instructional outputs and activities maintains societal concensus about the abstract ritual classifications by making local variations in the content and effectiveness of instructional practices invisible. This also allows instructional practices, although prescribed by rules institutionalized at highly generalized levels, to become adapted to unique local circumstances.
>
> In the American situation, attempts to tightly link the prescriptions of the central theory of education to the activities of instruction would create conflict and inconsistency and discredit and devalue the meaning of ritual classifications in society. Educators (and their social environments) therefore decouple their ritual structure from instructional activities and outcomes and resort to a "logic of confidence": Higher levels of the system organize on the assumption that what is going on at lower

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> levels makes sense and conforms to rules, but they avoid inspecting it to discover or assume responsibility for inconsistencies and ineffectiveness. In this fashion, educational organizations work more smoothly than is commonly supposed, obtain high levels of external support from divergent community and state sources, and maximize the meaning and prestige of the ritual categories of people they employ and produce. (Meyer and Rowan, 1978: 80)

Education as an instituion is composed of a stream of situations, many of which are bureaucratically organized, grounded in recipes based upon a set of axial norms. These norms and their situationally relevant recipes are crucial to understanding how schools and classrooms are organized.

## THE PRINCIPLE OF CULTURAL REPRODUCTION

There exists a belief among those concerned with schools (a belief so thoroughly ingrained that it is normally expressed in action, not in words) that schools transmit culture. In fact, what they transmit is a socially constructed conventional set of ideas about reality. Specifically, American public schools exist to foster the attitudes and skills that made America the leader of the Free World, the most productive economy on earth, the land of opportunity, the home of the free and the brave. As one student expressed the central idea transmitted, "I can because I am an Amer-I-can."

In its more sophisticated versions, the cultural reproduction norm holds that schools are charged with developing productive citizens. Because it is an institutional norm, by definition it emanates from a level of abstraction that permits sincere acceptance, along with divergent practical interpretations, throughout the system. Those at the top may respond to the imperative of training productive citizens by attempting to provide a variety of programs that fit realistic projections of local job openings three years hence. Teachers, following the same norm, may believe it is their responsibility to encourage every child to achieve his highest intellectual and creative potential. Unlike state education officials, teachers have no access to labor economists' statistics. Unlike teachers, officials do not get personally involved with individual children, spending a year with one small group, watching their hard won victories over math facts, their joy in capturing a toad. Each, in short, interprets the institutional norm according to his organizational situation.

There arises then, a probability that varying levels and important groups can disagree about exactly which elements of the culture are to be reproduced. All those within the institution agree that students should learn how to become good citizens (i.e., have positive self-concepts, behave themselves in accordance with situational standards, be able to organize their work, etc.), and learn "what everybody knows." Being able to read and write and do arithmetic are universally agreed upon elements that need reproduction (i.e., the basics), but there is less agreement on "values" and some practical knowledge (e.g., sex education). The dilemma for schools is exemplified by the goals of the Prairie Height I.S.D. (Board Action 8-9-76) which explicitly state that students will:

- Develop appropriate skills which will enable the student to function effectively in the areas of problem-solving and decision-making in a competitive society.
- Acquire knowledge of the free enterprise system in America
- Acquire knowledge of American heritage and the responsibilities and privileges of citizenship
- Acquire a level of competence which results in active participation in the workings of a democratic society

and goes on to add:

- In order to become a self-actualizing individual, effective in inter-personal relationships, a student in the Prairie Heights Independent School District will:
- Develop awareness of those influences which affect human behavior
- Develop competence in personal and social relations and a sense of self-worth

These are not "values," but aspects of a Way of Life, and it is essential that children understand this way (in both its idealized and realized forms). Yet, by what *modus operandi* does one teach "free enterprise," democracy, citizenship, personal skills? Encoded into instructional materials, written on posterboard and pasted on walls, celebrated through displays for holidays are cultural items designed for student absorption. Embedded in instructional materials (even the basic readers and math books) are idealized versions of free enterprise, democracy, and relational norms. Simply put, there is nothing basic about the basics (e.g., it is legitimate for children to learn about making commissions, profits, valued addedness, etc., while also learning basic fractions, additions, multiplications). Yet, even as we write, the basics versus "values" issue is apparent in Prairie Heights. Several groups of parents (who want their children to score high on technical matters when tested) are pushing "back to basics," arguing that televised programs, enrichment (e.g., fieldtrips), and items about social values should be reduced or excluded because they cut into instructional time. They have succeeded in getting removed from the in-district television network, several shows dealing with "values" (sex education, interpersonal relations) that were to be shown to sixth graders.

While there may be in many school districts dialogues like that in Prairie Heights, no one ever mentions the premise under which parents, school board members, administrators and teachers *can* argue. So ingrained is the principle of cultural reproduction, as too is Equity.

## THE PRINCIPLE OF EQUITY

Like the norm of schools as reproducers of the culture, the norm of equitable distribution of educational resources is universally accepted and situationally interpreted. That every component of the system - every student, teacher, school, school district - should have its equitable share is axiomatic. However, interpretations of "equitable" at the top stress sameness, at the bottom, fairness. At the administrative level, equity is approached by standardization, the provision of equal resources, the imposition of equal burdens. As Lortie observes, "The principle of *equality* is deeply rooted in the governance of American schools - a conception of equality as *sameness* pervades organizational life. In large city school systems, for example, allocations to individual schools of personnel and other resources are handled by "formulas" based on objective features such as number of pupils. There is widespread anxiety lest some group of parents charge them with favoritism to any single segment of the populace. Experimentation is reduced in curricular and other matters by this anxiety - what is done for some should be done for all."[4]
The corresponding teacher's perspective stresses the fairness component of equity. Every child is different, teachers know: no two children learn alike, some need more time, different materials, smaller groups. Pursuing the norm of equity in the situation they are in, teachers consider it their responsibility to provide for individual needs by adapting the resources and recipes they are alloted, which is after all, only fair.

We can observe the working out of the equity principle at every level in PHISD. Following the notion of equity as sameness, the administrative level allocates funds and personnel according to formula based on enrollment. Textbook adoptions, similarly, ensure that (with rare exceptions) every 6th grade student in the district will work with the same math book. Principals "even up the load" when they distribute pupils among classroom teachers. However, though they have the power to do so, they do not make assignments without at least consulting the teachers. For when decision making gets down to the teacher level, equity is interpreted with insistent stress on fairness. In the process of grouping students, where teachers are involved, every pupil placement must square with teachers' conception of fairness. According to this conception, for instance, every teacher at a grade level will be assigned an equal share of the very bright, the slow, the average, the troublemakers, leaders, and good citizens. By implication, they will also receive equal shares of interfering mothers, parents who consistently let their children oversleep and watch TV instead of completing homework assignments, as well as moms who will bake cupcakes for the Valentine's party. The extent to which teachers' ideas of fairness prevail is severely restricted by sameness-oriented administrators' power over resources. In practice, given state formulas, adopted texts, neighborhood schools, all decided upon at higher levels, only minor adjustments can be made in the classroom. Only for meticulously defined exceptional cases can deviations from standard shares be allowed. Such an exception is special education, limited by law to certain categories of seriously handicapped individual pupils. Not acceptable according to this norm is the teachers' belief that class loads in a transient working class neighborhood should be adjusted to correct for the additional burdens of teaching the hard-to-motivate. Similarly, where the ethnic composition of a few Prairie Heights neighborhoods creates special problems, the equity as sameness interpretation of those in a position to allocate resources decrees that one school unambiguously defined as exceptional by Federal Court order will be handsomely provided for, whereas schools in other neighborhoods of similar racial makeup will be allocated staff and materials by the formula. All these decisions are equitable. Only the teachers interacting every day with fellow teachers and with students of varying abilities, makes them always aware that fairness can't be judged by the book. The administrator's position, always under pressure for accountability to many constituencies, forces him to give priority to the reality that what is done for one (unless that one can be unequivocally defined as legitimately needy) will be demanded by all.

One might wish to argue that teachers are busy bending the rules, but this is not the case. Broad axial norms and vague institutional prescriptions must be made situationally relevant by teachers and in doing so, they follow the conventional recipes of their craft and profession. The fact that they can do so has been labelled "autonomy," and the system in which it happens "structurally loose."[5] Yet, as we show in our report, as recipes (as sets of instructions that limit as well as tell what to do) and resources filter down the system, they delimit areas of autonomy in crucial ways.

## TEACHER PERSPECTIVES AND THE SCHOOLING PROCESS

The core of education is the teaching/learning process, all else is extension. Teachers organize their work around this process whereas administrators organize their work around the extension of the process--schooling.[6]

Given a societal goal of mass education, the teaching/learning process has taken on a "batch" system of production within a bureaucratic setting; it has become schooling. As Federal and State agencies coordinate educational endeavors, local and regional cadres of administrators grow. As Bidwell notes, in educational organization, administrators are drawn from the ranks of teachers.[7] The administration of education is primarily staffed by ex-teachers who share with teachers an insider knowledge of the teacher perspective, or the recipes and more or less coordinated set of ideas and actions teachers use in situations.[8] However, the farther removed teachers become from the classroom, the more they become administrators, the more they take on an administration perspective not only of axial norms, but operative means.

The two perspectives are in tension, but not in conflict, for both arise out of, and loosely intergrate with each other; they legitimate each other. As Meyer and Rowan have argued (see the quotation p. 5) making the perspectives jibe might be disastrous for the enterprise; thus a logic of confidence is substituted for tightly coordinated inspection of work. We mention now the possibility that by sufficiently limiting the provisions and premises under which teachers work, one also effectively limits their improvisations such that they almost always fall within an acceptable range of behaviors.[9]

The differences in interpretation and action, in recipes,stem from position within the organization. Teacher culture, to a large degree, consists of informal rules for getting teacher work done. Teachers share a perspective about the teaching/learning process and their interactions with children that orient them differently than a "schooling" perspective would. At the core of the teacher perspective is the belief in the personal teacher/learner relationship whereby the teacher facilitates the learning of skills to the maximum ability of the learner thus aiding the survival of the group. That is, in the ideal, teachers see the children as individuals, more or less, and wish to maximize as much as possible the abilities of each child. The process implied in this view is different from a bureaucratic conception of schooling through batching of children, standarization of materials, and routinization. Yet, the teacher's idealized conceptions are constrained by the resources provided by the organization. The organization provides the materials that are to be used, the place where they are to be used, the allotments of minutes for which they are to be used and the premises and rationales for using them. What teachers bring to this situation is a more or less articulated agreement with the organization about the necessity for education, (especially in the basics) a desire to teach, and a belief that they can aid the individual children develop positive self-concepts and be good citizens. Abstractly, the actions developed out of the teacher perspective are developed in terms of the idealized norms, but as recipes, they are practiced in terms of making do within the bureaucratic set-up. For teachers, recipes for making do compromise the idealized version of the learning/teaching process by casting it within the larger bureaucratic process. Much of teacher work is said to be done for the children because doing things for the children is central to the idealized perspective of teachers. In fact, what is done for the children must be done through the channels established by the bureaucracy and thus must be done in only one of many possible but not allowable or practicable ways.

In effect, the bureaucratic system, "schooling", has standardized all that can be standardized cost effectively; beyond that, teacher culture assures good faith efforts to adapt standard procedures to the needs of particular children. Thus, what bureaucracy cannot command, it can constrain through the setting of conditions of work and its position as virtually the sole provider of resources for doing the job. Discretion for teachers becomes, in this context, making do within the framework (rather than initiating, *de novo*, another framework). Underlying our view is the assumption that understandings about what work is to be done, the recipes to be used, and expectations about competent performance are context bound, i.e., specific to the organizational and the specific school setting in which they were nurtured and became meaningfully organized.

A second aspect of the teacher perspective focuses on their conditions of work. Teachers believe they should have the right and freedom to teach without interference their own students in their own classroom. After all, it is they who know the students best; it is they who embody education and authority. The legitimacy of teachers' claim to autonomy in the classroom is of the highest order. It is affirmed by the professors of education who have trained them, by the expectations of parents and children, by the normal staffing pattern of school systems (which assigns to a principal more teachers than he or she can supervise closely) and, most concretely, by architects, who continue to design schools as collections of self-contained classrooms. The autonomous teacher, sovereign in the classroom--but also isolated from co-workers--is a key feature of school organization. It is an image sustained because teachers must see themselves as professionals not bureaucrats. As we and Lortie found, teachers expect principals to perform the bureaucratic function and to insulate them as much as possible from it.[10] Yet resources provided through the bureaucracy and prescriptions as to their use shape what teachers do and how they do it.

## RESOURCE ALLOCATION AND THE SCHOOL RESPONSE

Those who provide resources to schools, or have a right to determine how resources should be distributed, press upon schools their own expectations about action. For school districts, individual schools, and classrooms, they form the larger organization context or environment. In one sense, schools and individual classrooms are organized by their environments; that is, by the groups outside of them who either make demands on them or provide them with resources. Where there are such pressures, schools must control, manage and coordinate formal responses. It is our observation that schools, in those aspects of their work where they are dependent on other organizations or groups for resources or legitimacy, or where demands are made upon them, exercise relatively tight control over their outputs and are more bureaucratically organized. Or as Udy proposed in another context, "the greater the amount of pressure exerted on the organization from the social setting, the greater emphasis on administration".[11] For School Districts, groups that provide or press or do both are relatively stable, and thus, formalized responses (recipes) are also relatively stable.

Two major groups have traditionally made demands on schools and provided them with the resources necessary to do their jobs: state education agencies and parents. A third, relatively recent, but powerful is the Federal government, both as a provider of resources and premise setter (in the form of Federal court rulings, program eligibility standards, etc). One of the main tasks of school administrators, principals, and teachers is to ensure the relatively predictable and smooth flow of resources to the classroom, and the relatively smooth flow of information from the classroom to those who demand it. Parents, for example, get reports, but their involvement is limited to areas where the schools need them and away from areas where they do not want them. State agencies demand evidence of compliance with their expectation as does the Federal government. For school districts, how they set the boundaries around schools affects the flow of the most fundamental resource, children. Within each school, principals and teachers also have recipes for allocating children to classrooms (as well as other resources). The rules they use are important factors in the organization of classrooms.

## CLASSROOM ORGANIZATION: INITIAL AND EMERGENT VIEWS

The view developed in the above paragraphs arose out the merging of our initial problem focus and what we discovered in the field. As we originally conceived of the study, we proposed to generate descriptive data on the nature and extent of internal coordination in elementary schools, how it impacted on classroom organization, and explore the efficacy of the perspective of schools as structurally loose or as loosely coupled systems.[12] In the literature of school organization, such imagery is juxtaposed with that of schools as bureaucracies. While on one hand, there is a hierarchy of authority and standardization of product, there is, on the other, a great deal of autonomy operating on the basis of a "logic of confidence."[13]

Teachers often work alone in the classroom sealed off from colleagues and others, schools are spatially dispersed and relatively autonomous; however, there is also a routinization of events:

> In short, both the temporal division of labor and the structural looseness of school systems reinforce the professional basis of school system activities — the discretion of staff members and subunits to determine what services are to be provided and how this is to be done. But the school system cannot rely entirely on such judgements, since a uniform product must be attained and since the movement of students from grade to grade, and thus from classroom to classroom and school to school, within the system must be sequential. To put the point somewhat differently, the product of each classroom and school unit must be uniform with respect to the next stage of the student career. Even if activities within the classroom and school units of the system are not routinized, the movement of students from one unit to the next must be.
>
> Maintaining this routinization, therefore, is a principal task of school-system administration. Insuring the object of administrative control is the universalistic and thus uniform assessment of student accomplishment and the subsequent determination of institutional procedures, also universalistic, solely in response to student differences in this measured performance.
> (Bidwell, 1965:976)

Other researchers made similar observations: administrators seek to have tight control over management concerns (e.g., timing of reports, budgetary matters, but seek to exercise little control, if any, in the area of classroom organization and instruction which are seen to be the teacher's prerogative.[14] Thus, the major orienting framework for our study was the nature and degree of internal coordination. We wanted to identify linkages, establish how they operated, and explain how schools "work" under the conditions of their organization. We found in fact that the combined imagery of schools as loosely coupled, resources dependent bureaucracies had much explanatory power and much of our report is framed within this context. As we explored the directions each perspective provided, we came again and again to the central theme of the report as developed above. Those highly placed within the institutional hierarchy, through their power to set premises and provide resources establish the context with in which teachers must choose from a limited set of recipes. Actors at each level of the hierarchy share a belief in the axial principles of the institution, but differ in their situational application of recipes designed to achieve these principles. Teachers must act in a stream of situations much different from administrators, but like administrators seek to make them non-problematic and routine so that socially shared recipes will work. Internal coordination is achieved through the limiting of actions teachers can take by providing them with only certain resources and recipes for action. Having de-limited their capacity for improvisation, inspection of work may not be necessary and may actually be a threat to the organization as it now operates. But teachers must do the detail work, and while what they do is in line with the larger normative structure, it must also be adaptive to the specific situation. It is here that teaching is profession and craft , art and perspective. Teachers' operative rules, their recipes for action, ultimately result in the ongoing organization of classrooms.

Since our focus is on the social organization of schools and classrooms and how teacher work gets accomplished, we were not specifically concerned with student outcomes. We did not define as part of our work assessing quality learning or reviewing academic theories about learning. In fact, one of the findings of our report is that teachers are responsible for teaching, but not for learning (which is the student's responsibility). We did not feel competent to judge whether students were learning, but we took teachers' and principals' statements about students' learning and what they did about it, to be aspects of our study. As Clark notes, understanding of the organization of classrooms must be done within "the context of larger social structures that encompass and shape it," and this is what we have set out to do.[15]

To educators, both within the district we studied, and without, a study such as this, done by "outsiders" may appear as a risky thing. While insiders have their version of how the organization runs and should run, outsiders may not share these sentiments, and may in examining the organization appear to be critical of its doings. Those of us who study social organization believe that organizations can be compared no matter how different they appear in purpose. We do not take for granted that the purpose of the organization is what those involved say it is. Organizations are not perfect mechanisms for attaining official purposes, nor unofficial ones. We agree with Perrow in his assessment that organizations are socially constructed, supported, and subsized resources in themselves that can be used for a wide variety of often contradictory purposes.[16] Whether or not the organization does what it says it does is open to study, not belief. This perspective, while it may lead to an increase in knowledge about social organization, can easily be seen by those in the organization as criticism. We feel as Becker, et al., do:

> But our purpose is not criticism, but observation and analysis. When we report what we have learned, it is important that we do so faithfully. We have a double duty -- to our own profession of social observation and analysis and to those who have allowed us to observe their conduct. We do not report everything we observe, for to do so would violate confidences and otherwise do harm. On the other hand, we musttake care not to bias our analyses and conclusions. Finding a proper balance between our obligations to our informants and the organization, on the one hand, and our scientific duty, on the other, is not easy. We have been at some pains to find such a balance. (Becker, et al., 1961:15).

Yet there is a particular focus in our study: classroom organization. Our data base consists primarily of daily observations of teachers and principals at work, formal and informal interviews with them and examination of the documents they use and create. One must keep this in mind, for there are few organizations that look the same to all participants.

In the chapters that follow, we examine key features that impact on classroom organization and teacher work and link these to the broader organizational structure: Chapter II describes the history and organization of the Prairie Heights Independent School District and the four study schools. In Chapter III we discuss the resource structure of the school district, federal and parental involvement, and how these impact on classroom organization. The varied views of principal's work, what they actually do, and factors which contribute to the relative lack of inspection of teacher work are discussed in Chapters IV and V.

The remainder of the report analyses other salient features of how classrooms are organized and teacher work accomplished. Chapter VI concerns the myriad aspects of grouping decisions made that determine the student make-up in the classroom. Chapter VII examines the temporal organization of the school and emphasizes the contingent, improvisational nature of teacher work. Chapter VIII and IX focus on how teachers manage classrooms, do instruction and administer the curriculum to their charges. Our conclusions are presented in Chapter X. Finally, in Appendix A, our methods are detailed.

## CHAPTER I

## FOOTNOTES

1. See Berger and Luckmann, 1967:65.

2. See Goffman, 1959.

3. See March and Simon, 1958. Actions at the top control the flows of resources and information as well as accepted (and provided recipes for action). In this manner, they control the premises for behavior, the implements to be used, the manner of use. In the last analysis, however, it is always possible for individuals to deviate from the acceptable ranges of behavior.

4. Lortie, 1969:7.

5. See Bidwell, 1965.

6. For a discussion of extensions through culture, see Hall, 1977.

7. See Bidwell, 1965.

8. A similar definition can be found in Becker, et al, 1961:34.

9. See Perrow's (1979) discussion (and extension) of March and Simon. He notes,

> Premise controls are most important when work is non-routine (since such work by definition cannot have standardized inputs, throughputs, and outputs, and cannot be specialized, nor governed by rules), and this is one reason scientists and other professionals have such latitude in organizations. Their premises are well set in their training institutions and professional associations. Premise controls are also most important near the top of organizations because managerial work there is less routine, the consequences of decisions are hard to assess immediately, and access to company resources is greatest, providing more opportunities to use company property and power for one's own ends. This is why social class, ethnic origins, and social networks sre so important--they make it more likely that certain kinds of premises will exist. Further down the hierarchy, bureaucratic and direct controls increase in importance. But fully unobtrusive premise controls exist at all levels, created and reinforced by schools, the mass media, and cultural institutions in general. (1979:152)

10. Lortie, 1969:13, 49.

11. Udy, 1965:690.

12. Bidwell, 1965; Weick, 1976; Meyer and Rowan, 1978.

13. Meyer and Rowan, 1978.

14. Lortie, 1969; Meyer and Rowan, 1977.

15. Clark, 1964.

16. See Perrow, 1979.

# CHAPTER II

## PRAIRIE HEIGHTS I.S.D. AND THE STUDY SCHOOLS: BRIEF DESCRIPTIONS

Education is serious business in Prairie Heights ISD. Good schools are believed to attract desirable newcomers and to undergrid neighborhood structure. A major newspaper in the metropolitan area recently described the importance of PHISD schools in the following manner:

> The classified ads for real estate leave many newcomers with the unmistakable impression that the Prairie Heights Independent School District is somehow superior.
> 'Immaculate home in Prairie Heights schools', the ad reads, 'All homes are in the highly respected Prairie Heights School District'. In some ads, 'Prairie Heights schools' appears in the largest type, getting top billing above the house's number of bedrooms and its proximity to shopping.'

And as the perceived quality of the schools appears to affect the quality of neighborhoods, so too neighborhoods influence the performance of the schools, both their level of achievement in the formal curriculum (the substance of which, as we shall point out, is largely standard throughout the state) and the context in which the formal curriculum is imparted. In discussing PHISD, emphasis must be placed on neighborhoods for two reasons: (1) the salience of the neighborhood school and (2) the variation in neighborhoods that schools serve.

Neighborhoods, as clusters of people with given social characteristic living within a defined territory, influence schools in several direct and indirect ways. First, they provide the clientele--the students--without which schools need not exist. Secondly, neighborhoods vary in the degree of parental support they give schools.

Parents can participate in school life through providing labor, time, and money for school affairs. However, although they may desire to participate, other features of their lives may make it difficult for them to do so, and these factors affect the support available for the neighborhood school. For example, as data from one study school in a neighborhood with a high proportion of single parents indicates, parents who must work may want to support the schools but simply cannot, given the conditions of their lives; or they may believe that the schools are to provide the sole source of motivation for students, or no matter what their beliefs, they may simply move in and out of the neighborhood at a high rate. While on the whole the neighborhoods in the PHISD are relatively homogeneous, thee is some variation in neighborhood characteristics. Because of the commitment by PHISD to neighborhood elementary schools, these variations affect ongoing everyday organization in the classroom and, generally, in the school.

## PRAIRIE HEIGHTS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

### Socio-Historical Context

The Prairie Heights Independent[1] School District (PHISD) encompasses virtually all of city of Prairie Heights and also portions of the central city. In addition, it serves a tiny enclave of exurbia, free from urban zoning restrictions, where horses graze and roosters crow within earshot of one of our sample schools. The general extent of these boundaries was set in 1886, when PHISD was an outlying rural district concerned with providing basic grade school education for children of cotton farmers and their field hands. The first PHISD school opened in 1853, one year before the governor of the then newly annexed state of Texas signed a bill setting up the first state public school system. Following state law, until passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, PHISD maintained a dual public school system, which, in the years prior to the second World War was housed in two buildings. The current Administration Building was then the white school. The original black grade 1-12 school, now razed, was replaced by a new plant in 1955; this building now houses the district's elementary magnet school, one of the four schools in our sample.

The city of Prairie Heights today is a residential city of about 83,000 people with several large science-oriented, high technology industrial plants, varied white collar operations--many involving data processing. It is also the site of an upper division and graduate campus of The University of Texas and an agricultural extension branch of the other state university system. Today there is virtually no farming done in Prairie Heights. Compared to its neighboring central city, Prairie Heights is relatively homogeneous by income. Only after World War II, with the construction of a major freeway northward from the central city, did this former cotton farming hamlet burgeon into a growth center for middle and upper middle income single family housing. Some apartment complexes were built too, mostly in the southern part of the city, but even today single family housing predominates. Growth has slowed now and is largely confined to filling in the northern tracts with 2000+ square foot single family dwellings.

The areas of the central city included in PHISD are not as homegeneous as Prairie Heights itself, but do contain a significant number of middle and upper middle income single family housing (and as in Prairie Heights, the last remaining sections of land left undeveloped are now being covered with 2000+ square foot custom single family homes). There are some apartments (all moderately expensive), and there is a housing development, built during the early fifties exclusively for Blacks (which we will discuss later).

In 1946 a new Supprintendent, Tyler Johnson, took over the system and its student population of 350, split between the white school and the black. One long-time PHISD principal described Dr. Johnson's style:

> You have to understand the type of superintendent that Tyler Johnson was. In 1946, this system was in the administration building. The whole high school, gym, everything was in the administration building. There were 356-66 students, less than 400 in that [Administration] building. Prairie Heights was just a little suburb. You have to look at the personality of a man who developed that into 31 schools, 4 high schools, 8 or 9 Jr. Highs. So you have the style of leadership that he used, P.R. and everything.
>
> What happened, to be frank, in Prairie Heights, because of Dr. Johnson's style of leadership was that over twenty-seven little kingdoms were developed. Each building principal had been given a great deal of autonomy and Dr. Johnson encouraged that because it developed creativity. It was not unusual for one school to be doing a real neat thing over here and another principal to say, "that works for you, but it didn't work for me and my teachers and therefore I'm not going to do that." It worked well but as the district got bigger and bigger there began to be some real problems. There were no parameters around programs.

The relatively loose structure of the district under Dr. Johnson's leadership, for instance, permitted completion of several "open plan" elementary schools despite the Superintendent's personal commitment to self-contained classrooms. Protest from a few parents who objected to what they felt was a loss of control implied in open classrooms quickly brought about (with Dr. Johnson's approval) a local enclosure movement (known to some as "The Year of the Wall"). Dr. Johnson's 30 year tenure coincided with the transformation of Prairie Heights from cotton land to prime suburb. Supported by the town's increasingly urban, middle class clientele, Dr. Johnson shaped many of the features that characterize the district today: neighborhood schools, self-contained classrooms, emphasis on college preparation (85% of PHISD graduates go on to college), pride in academic achievement, non-participation in federal programs, cautiousness about innovation in general, and personal attention to students as individuals. (For 30 years Dr. Johnson sent every PHISD student a card each year on the student's birthday.)

Since Dr. Johnson's retirement, the district has stabilized at 35 elementary schools, 10 junior high schools, and 4 senior high (with a total enrollment of 37,300 students, 18,954 of which were in elementary school). As of 1979 no new schools will be built, though some old ones may be expanded. In 1979 the largest elementary housed 1,077 students, the smallest regular elementary 288. Twenty-nine of the 35 elementary schools had student populations between 400 and 700. According to a comparison published recently in a local newspaper, PHISD elementary students (in third through sixth grades) do much better than students from the central city district and as well as other suburban districts possessing similar neighborhood characteristics.

## Parent Values

Though our study did not include direct survey of parent attitudes, we have gained an impression from talking with school staff and reading extensive coverage of school affairs in the Prairie Heights press that school constituents' values have not changed significantly since Dr. Johnson's time. There may be more expressed concern about Basics and more fear of secular humanism; at least these are prominent in newspaper accounts in an election year. However, the underlying values seem constant. School people believe parents want strong training in basic skills, reading, math, and writing. Beyond this, they want the extra edge for their children that they believe an outstanding public school system can confer. Whether this edge should take the form of more intensive drill or enrichment is a matter of some debate. As we will emphasize later in our report, the edge cannot be accelerated progress, earlier graduation, for instance, or admission to the university with sophomore standing. Of course parents who are actively concerned about their children's progress, parents who in some cases have actually moved into the district specifically to buy a PHISD education for their children give the schools an edge. As one 1st grade teacher told us:

> I guess I feel like we are very fortunate because our parents are high achievers, they want their children to achieve. Every child comes into first grade wanting to read and wanting to write. So the children are just thrilled over it and our community is geared that way, they have had lots of books and they have been exposed to a lot of things. So the parents have talked school up at home. We don't have to motivate our students.

The Deputy Superintendent for Instruction also acknowledged this factor: "We've got kids who come to school with a whole lot of neat experiences. Their parents provide them with a good home and educational environment. It is not too difficult to succeed with those kinds of kids."

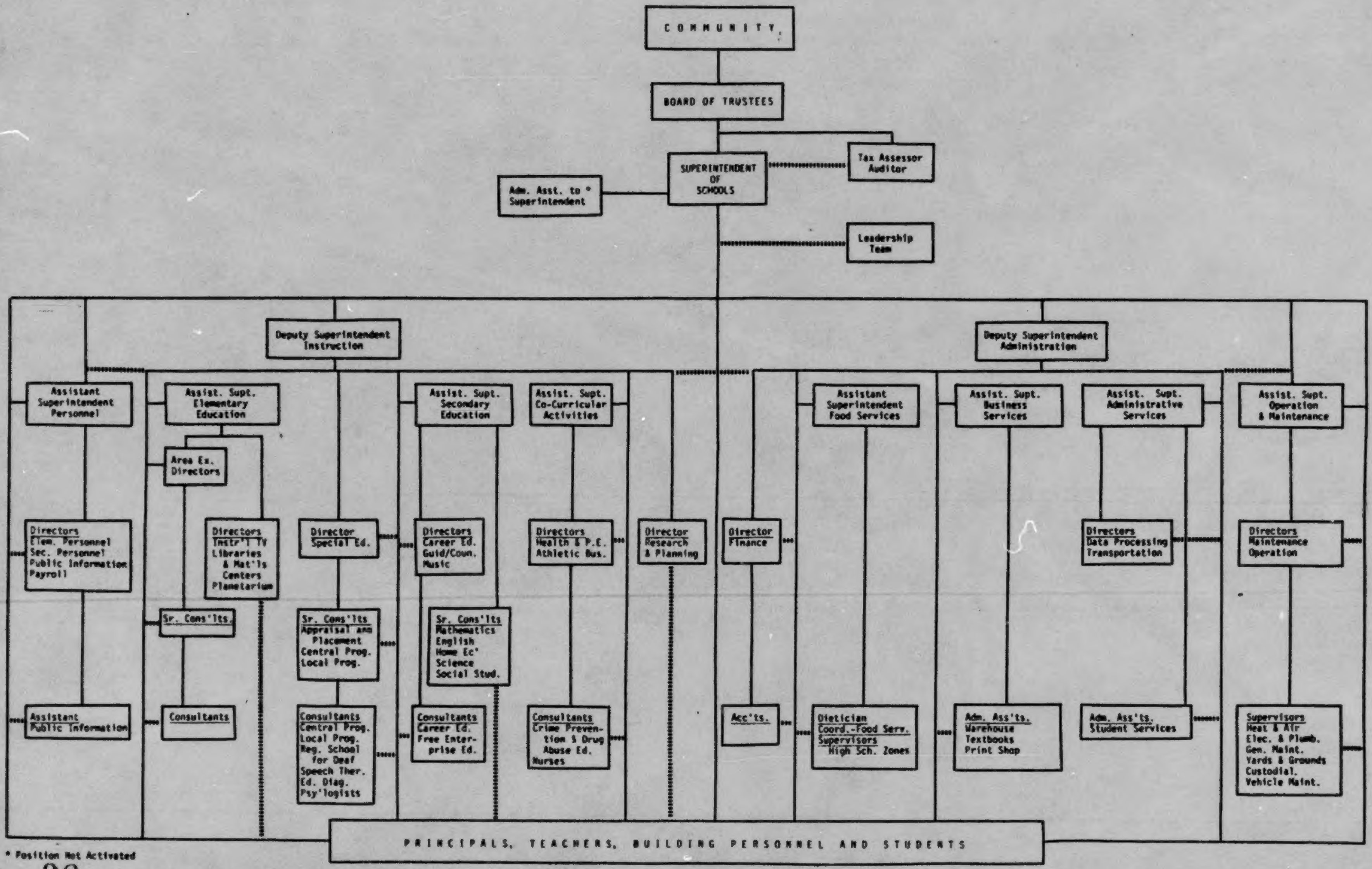
## Administrative Structure

During the years that PHISD experienced its tremendous growth, the administrative component of the district expanded from one superintendent to the extensive staff shown in Figure One. Whereas during Dr. Johnson's day principals would simply call him up or visit him, now they interact directly with Area Executive Directors (added in 1977) who work directly under the Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Instruction. The Area Executive Directors have the responsibility of directly supervising the elementary schools' activities, evaluating principals, and assigning consultants, (district employed curriculum specialists, usually former teachers) to the schools. When we began the study, there were four AEDs--one for each of the four high school catchment areas of PHISD. However, with the reorganization of the administrative structure of the magnet school, a fifth AED was added. As we note later, his responsibility is the magnet elementary school that is the cotter pin of desegregation in PHISD. The elementary consultants were once centrally housed, but with creation of AEDs were decentralized to the four areas. They are supposed to act as instructional guides and resource providers for teachers. They have no supervisory authority over the teachers; their assistance is provided when requested by teachers through the principal. Within the school building, principals are responsible for both administration and instruction (see Chapter IV).

Though most of this bureaucratic elaboration occurred during the explosive growth of the PHISD between 1946 and 1976, potential for tighter administrative control of individual schools has been created since Dr.

Figure II-1

Plan of Organization
PHISD, November, 1978


COMMUNITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
Tax Assessor Auditor
Adm. Asst. to * Superintendent
Leadership Team
Deputy Superintendent Instruction
Deputy Superintendent Administration
Assistant Superintendent Personnel
Assist. Supt. Elementary Education
Assist. Supt. Secondary Education
Assist. Supt. Co-Curricular Activities
Assistant Superintendent Food Services
Assist. Supt. Business Services
Assist. Supt. Administrative Services
Assist. Supt. Operation & Maintenance
Area Ex. Directors
Directors Elem. Personnel Sec. Personnel Public Information Payroll
Directors Instr'l TV Libraries & Mat'ls Centers Planetarium
Director Special Ed.
Directors Career Ed. Guid/Coun. Music
Directors Health & P.E. Athletic Bus.
Director Research & Planning
Director Finance
Directors Data Processing Transportation
Directors Maintenance Operation
Sr. Cons'lts.
Sr. Cons'lts Appraisal and Placement Central Prog. Local Prog.
Sr. Cons'lts Mathematics English Home Ec' Science Social Stud.
Assistant Public Information
Consultants
Consultants Central Prog. Local Prog. Reg. School for Deaf Speech Ther. Ed. Diag. Psy'logists
Consultants Career Ed. Free Enterprise Ed.
Consultants Crime Prevention & Drug Abuse Ed. Nurses
Acc'ts.
Dietician Coord.-Food Serv. Supervisors High Sch. Zones
Adm. Ass'ts. Warehouse Textbooks Print Shop
Adm. Ass'ts. Student Services
Supervisors Heat & Air Elec. & Plumb. Gen. Maint. Yards & Grounds Custodial. Vehicle Maint.
PRINCIPALS, TEACHERS, BUILDING PERSONNEL AND STUDENTS

* Position Not Activated

Johnson's retirement. Specifically, the new position of Executive Area Director, described above, has been added. One principal described the emergence of this office:

> **Researcher:** Can I ask you a question about the area directors, that's a relatively recent phenomena.
>
> **Principal:** Last year was the first year for area directors.
>
> **Researcher:** Do you know the rationale for putting them in? Is it just that the district is growing or that they wanted more coordination?
>
> **Principal:** It's all of those. One thing you have to remember is that there was a change in Superintendents. The new Superintendent, Paul James, wasn't the Great White Father. He understood--he was his protege--the process, but he wasn't Tyler Johnson - so one of the first things a successful administrator learns is that you can't be somebody else and you can't have negative self-concepts because you are not. So, Paul James had to step into his shoes with his own approach and Paul...I respect very much. He is very democratic in that his motto is "I hire good people and then I move away and let them do what they do best." But that doesn't mean that he shirks his responsibility.
>
> One of the reasons for having area directors was to define the parameters so that it didn't just keep going and going. When you are small you can allow creativity to grow and just keep doing your thing, you can branch off like a tree and just get bigger and bigger, but even the nicest tree has to be pruned.

At present, the Area Directors serve primarily as a communications link between the central administration and principals. Potentially, they could provide the means for tighter supervision of individual schools. There is potential for tighter administrative linkages, too, in a post-Johnson trend toward appointing new elementary school principals from among the ranks of Consultants, for that is often the origin of women principals, rather than from secondary teaching ranks as is the normal practice when male principals are appointed. In the waning years of the Johnson superintendency, 1974-76, women were first appointed elementary school principals.

The first two appointees came from the ranks of Consultants and this trend continues today. Currently, the ranks of women principals have grown to 14 of 35 elementary principalships and 3 of 4 assistant principals.[2] Of the seven PHISD principals with doctorates (which might indicate administrative aspirations), all are in elementary schools and 5 are women. Although a black woman principal had served in the late 1940s as principal of the districts one black school, the first black administrator to supervise white teachers and students was appointed in 1979 as assistant principal at the magnet school.

So far the potential for combining the Area Directorships (and Consultants) to produce tighter linkages between central administration and individual school has been somewhat realized only under the special circumstances of the magnet school, which is under the aegis of a Federal court order. In Chapter V, we discuss why we believe tighter linkages are not likely to spread throughout the district. In effect, then, the system remains much like it was in Dr. Johnson's time, a system of neighborhood schools and self-contained classrooms, implicitly coordinated by a common curriculum, accounting practices and teacher shared, craft recipes for doing their job in the schooling context, but one that is loosely supervised.

## Teacher Concerns

Elementary teachers in PHISD are most concerned about the classroom group and the children. They do not believe, on the whole, that their expert, craft knowledge of the teaching situation either requires or entitles them to reshape the system. None of the three teacher organizations in PHISD is affiliated with unions, none advocates collective bargaining, and teachers in the district do not appear at this time interested in either. The three organizations express disapproval of unionization in principle and particularly of collective bargaining: "Our organization doesn't want power, we just want a voice in decision making," the president of one of these groups announced recently in voicing opposition to the organizing efforts of a local teachers' union. Elementary teachers say again and again they do not wish involvement in education politics:

> The speech therapist said she had no knowledge of the reasons why Plan A requires so much paper work. She is not interested in politics, she says. Someone else needs to take care of these legal matters because all she cares about is kids. This year the paperwork load is intolerable. She estimates it takes about a fifth of her working day.

Elementary teachers think it might look bad for them to take an interest in matters beyond the classroom. One teacher's response, typical of the teachers we talked with, identifies "the major issues confronting teachers in PHISD":

> Backing by the principal, job security, and freedom to plan my own teaching. This year, for the first time, though, I've joined four or five, whatever number there are, teacher organizations in PHISD. The dues are taken out of my paycheck. This is mainly just in case, what with students suing, and also the pay issue. I've never really been all that interested in politics, because there's no way I'm going to leave the district. My hunch is teachers mostly don't get involved in politics because it could look bad; it could hurt them if they were seen as troublemakers.

When elementary teachers do meet in big groups, in the lounge or at meetings, they talk most about individual kids. They discuss curriculum infrequently and budget even less. There is little interest shown in elections for Teachers' Association representatives, and when representatives report back at faculty meetings, they are likely to talk about insurance, discounts on merchandise at local stores for teachers, and other such matters.[3]

## Desegregation

Passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 put an end to PHISD's dual system. The neighborhood school policy developed under Dr. Johnson for white pupils would henceforth apply throughout the district. In fact, since 1955 a large proportion of the district's black pupils had lived in a single neighborhood, a planned community of single family homes, developed with its own neighborhood school grades 1 to 12. Technically, the black development was within the central city boundaries, though at the time miles from any other development in the city. The middle class blacks who live in this neighborhood are still mostly commuters to the central city. Responding to litigation based on the 1964 law, PHISD formally opened white neighborhood schools to all children in those neighborhoods. The first actual change in school attendance came in 1969 when black high school students, formerly restricted to their neighborhood 1-12 school, which their parents contended was limited in its course offerings, began attending the regular white high schools. Seeking to desegregate the remaining all black school, the Justice Department filed suit in August, 1970, and a month later the Fifth Circuit Court ruled that junior high age students from that school be reassigned to other junior highs and that majority-to-minority transfers be permitted. The court order also required that the faculty in every PHISD school reflect the then current racial proportion in the schools of 3% black, 97% white, a ratio which has not changed greatly since 1970. Current estimates indicate PHISD is 93% white, 4.1% black, 1.3% Hispanic, 1.4% Asian and 0.2% Indian. Under that order the black school was to be retained as a neighborhood elementary school only.

The Justice Department sought and obtained a rehearing on the suit in 1974. In 1975, the U.S. Court of Appeals found that segregation still existed and ordered the racial identity of Carmine Elementary School, now the magnet school, removed. One plan, submitted by PHISD and accepted by the Court, was termed Pacesetter and entailed a "superior instructional program."[4] The basis for integration was a 50-50 mix of black and non-black students, with non-black students volunteering to attend Carmine.

To attract volunteer students, the school offered:

A lowered teacher pupil ratio: 1/20
An extended Plan A program for underachievers with one resource teacher per grade level.
A greater extent of instructional learning aids.
A full-time psychologist.
Experienced teachers (80% with masters' degrees).

Thus the school attracted both slow learners and gifted volunteer students. To further enhance the program, an extended day program was developed. Students can attend school from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. with craft and sports programs offered prior to and after normal school hours.

The plan proved successful in attracting the 50% of volunteer students required by the courts and some grade levels have a waiting list for entry. While the basis of integration is majority to minority, some neighborhood students are bused to close-by schools, if the percentage of neighborhood students in any one grade level exceeds 50.

In summary, PHISD is a prosperous district, 94% white, and its namesake city, Prairie Heights, is no longer attached to the central city by a freeway lifeline, but bordered on all sides by the central city and other suburbs. Working class (and single parent) families, many of whom hope to advance their children's opportunities by giving them a PHISD education, now live in the apartment complexes within district boundaries. The school district has grown to resemble urban districts in many respects. It is bureaucratized and standardized even though student population shows more variation by neighborhood. Still the district retains its distinctiveness. Most striking is its success in maintaining distance from any Federal programs. PHISD will accept services offered (to the deaf, for instance), but never funds. It has no ESEA Title I Funds. The district has kept its costs under control, eschewing expensive research and innovation and holding per pupil expenditure significantly below central city levels ($1,295 vs. $1,808) as well as average teacher salary ($13,070 vs. $14,462). At a time when many school districts are undergoing crises, PHISD has maintained its reputation for both efficiency and effectiveness. Very concretely, it is said that the PHISD difference adds at least $5,000 to the value of a house within the district as compared to an identical house in most of the adjoining districts. Whatever the dollar figure, residents within Prairie Heights ISD and especially the city of Prairie Heights, consider their school system to be one of their greatest assets. Tyler Johnson, who once served simultaneously as school superintendent and president of the Prairie Heights Chamber of Commerce, would appreciate that.

## RESEARCH SETTINGS: THE FOUR STUDY SCHOOLS

The Prairie Heights Independent School District consented to make four of their thirty-five elementary schools available for the research. While most of the thirty-five elementaries serve white-middle class families, a few have significant groups of minorities. After preliminary discussions with the Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education, four schools were selected to capture the range of student and staff variation in the district (for a discussion of our methods see Appendix A). During the first school year, all grade levels (K-6) were observed while during the second, the first and sixth grades were concentrated on. Though the four schools chosen are within the same district and thus report to the same central administation and are governed by its rules and allocative decisions, they differ in fact administratively and operationally in response primarily to different student characteristics. Only two of our study schools (Baldy and Duncan) correspond to the local image of Prairie Heights schools. Both schools have stable neighborhood populations of middle to upper-middle income students with average to above average intelligence. The two other schools represent extremes in a relatively stable school district. Carmine Elementary is the magnet school with a special program developed for a court ordered desegregation plan. Adobe is located in a transitional neighborhood with a highly transient, low-middle income population to which the school has responded by changes in instructional programs. Because the study included only 4 of 35 elementary schools, it can only be surmised to what extent Adobe and Carmine differ from, or Baldy and Duncan correspond to the other elementary schools. However, because the sample schools vary as they do, we believe similarities among the four study schools indicate organizational variables that affect elementary schools throughout the district.

The following sections describe the student characteristics, administration, and instructional programs of each of the schools: Adobe, Baldy, Carmine and Duncan. Our concern here and throughout the remaining chapters is not with "case studies" of the schools, but with commonalities across classrooms. Thus, the reader will not find here or elsewhere lengthly, ethnographic descriptions of the four schools.

### Adobe Elementary School

Adobe School (1979 student population 651; teachers 31) stands in a pleasant neighborhood of moderately priced single family homes (a few expensive ones) and modern apartments. Situated at the boundary between Prairie Heights and the central city, the neighborhood adjoins commercial tracts in both cities and is directly accessible to one of Prairie Heights' major industries, an electronics plant that employs many semi-skilled women as well as professionals. Patterns of industrial and residential development in the area have resulted in a concentration of apartments that accept children. A large proportion of the school community is made up of these apartment dwellers, frequently single women employed in semi-skilled work and responsible, with very little support, for the upbringing of several children.[5]

Although predominantly Anglo, the school has a high percentage of minority children compared to the district average of 5%. The percentages of black enrollment for our sample schools (March, 1979) are Adobe 20% black; Baldy 0.6%; Duncan 3%; Carmine, of course, is 50% black by court order. Adobe also has a number of non-English speaking children. As reported in Adobe's Self-Study for the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

> After the end of the war in Vietnam early in 1975, there was a large influx of Vietnamese nationals to the Prairie Heights area. Because of the availability of low rent apartments, sponsors for these families found apartments for them in the Adobe area. Also, near the end of the 1976-1977 school year, one apartment complex operated by HUD was sold to a private owner/corporation. Rents were raised almost immediately, and families began moving out. Some withdrew their children only two weeks before school was out.

In the view of school staff, it is the transiency, not racial make-up of the student population, that poses the major problem. Figures are available on stability of student population for only two of our sample schools, Adobe and Baldy. The contrast between them is striking. Of Baldy 6th graders (1978-79) 80% had attended just 1 or 2 schools, 20%, 3 or more; for Adobe 6th graders, only 34% had attended 1 or 2 schools, 76%, 3 or more; and 11% of Adobe 6th graders had attended 6 or more schools.

During the fall of 1977, the principal of Adobe (along with the Area Director) conducted a comparison study of Adobe and another Prairie Heights elementary believed to have "enough similarities to provide a fair comparison." The comparison was made to assess Adobe's uniqueness as compared to other PHISD elementaries as the principal claimed. If the school was unique, it was reasoned, then "common guidelines are inappropriate in decision making for Adobe." Results from the study revealed that Adobe had a student turnover rate three times that of the other school. Of the 591 students enrolled in September, 271 (46%) would be gone by May, and 158 (27%) new students would replace them. Commenting to us on this finding the principal noted that the turnover was increasing and that some student slots turned over two or three times during the course of an entire school year. This is in comparison to a rate of about 15% at the other elementary. Moreover, the study documented that 51% (in 1976) of the parents were single parents (as compared to 17% at the other elementary); many homes either did not have telephone service or did not provide the correct (and current) telephone numbers such that the principal spent "a considerable amount of time in home visitation, as this is the only means of contacting many of the parents." The reasons for this transiency are not clear. What is known is that many of the mothers, newly divorced, must move from houses and choose the best apartment they can afford. Sometimes two women, each with children, will share an apartment. When rents rise, they must either move or take second jobs, and in either case their children's schooling suffers.

Staff at Adobe is standard for a PHISD elementary school of its size: principal, 23 classroom teachers, music teacher, P.E. teacher, librarian, counselor, speech therapist, and 3 special education teachers. To work with the immigrant children, Adobe has a part time special instructor, fluent in Vietnamese, who takes children in small groups by grade level for coaching in English. Staff turnover at Adobe is low and *esprit de corps* remarkable. Adobe teachers accept the fact that they work with children who are not typical of Prairie Heights, in fact, a feeling of uniqueness boosts morale. These teachers are strongly supported on discipline by the principal; they know they are doing a good job--a fact confirmed in the fall of 1979 by an accreditation team from the Southern Association of Schools and Colleges. Asked to account for teachers' loyalty to the school, one teacher said (and those listening agreed), "We just have a good atmosphere here. Kids who are big problems at other schools are not a problem here... Kids at Adobe accept a lot of differentness in other kids. If your dad is in prison, it isn't the end of the world here. Kids can take that."

Like the staff to student ratio, Adobe's physical plant is standard for the district. It has well equippped playgrounds (although, unable to call on neighborhood dads to build play equipment, Adobe had to hire a contractor to do the job), a gym, cafetorium, library with study areas where pupils may work with cassettes. One corridor has been converted for use as a resource classroom. The arrangement of classrooms is nearly ideal. Each grade level has its own cluster of 4 classrooms, each pair of which can be opened for large group instruction. The cluster includes also a teachers' workroom and a private corridor that is sometimes used for small group work. Coordination among teachers at a grade level is facilitated by this layout, and movement of students between classrooms is unusually convenient. Adobe teachers enjoy all the benefits of self-contained classrooms and have the flexibility for cooperation whenever they wish to combine classes.

In short, Adobe School does not fit the Prairie Heights image: children of successful businessmen moving efficiently through school with high achievement scores toward admission to selective colleges. At Adobe student transiency and diversity necessarily affect the day by day realization of the standard PHISD program.

## Baldy Elementary School

Baldy Elementary (student population 461; 24 teachers) was opened in 1964, adjacent to Tyler Johnson High School in the northernmost part of Prairie Heights. Residential construction continues today in the Baldy neighborhood as the last open land is filled in with large single family homes at a slow steady pace--homes that blend in with the already developed upper income area. Student enrollment at Baldy is the most stable of the four sample schools. PTA membership is highest in the district and parents devote many hours to the school; the school is seen by both parents and staff as a "community school." The desirability of teaching at this school, coupled with a district custom of recognizing seniority in place have assured a faculty with long average service in the building. Almost all teachers have been at the school three years or more.

Besides classroom teachers, Baldy has two resource teachers and a counselor to work with students that need extra help. Until this year, Baldy had no art room or art teacher. The principal, after working on the idea for a year, furnished an extra room in the building for art classes and got two parent volunteers to teach art once a month to each class. As is standard practice in PHISD, it is not until the 6th grade that classroom teachers begin to departmentalize: one teaches reading, one teaches math, and the other social studies. The students move by homeroom to each of the classrooms.

The principal at Baldy particularly stresses professionalization of teaching. The result of this effort is relatively high autonomy for teachers in the classroom and, on the other hand, considerable structure in matters concerning the school as a whole. In the classroom, Baldy teachers, more than others in our study, are encouraged to develop management and instructional styles that achieve school objectives by methods they judge appropriate. Such differences are reflected in a wide variety of classroom arrangements which characterizes this school: small and large group work tables, reading corners, open areas for group performances, college-ruled lines of desks for seat work. Ensconced in self-contained classrooms, Baldy teachers are, both by physical situation and by policy, least interdependent and least subject to principals' efforts at standardization. Encouraging professionalization takes the form of relatively elaborate arrangements for teacher involvement in whole school affairs, however.

To this end, teachers are assigned to committees which are formed to deal with school operations and instruction. These committees include the basic subject areas, and there is one teacher each from the primary and intermediate grades on the reading, math, science and social studies committees. Other committees are concerned with the non-class aspects of schooling; i.e., lunchroom, halls, field trips. Thus, problems encountered in the school are taken to committee members first, then, if need be, to the principal. The school also has a "liaison" committee which meets regularly with the principal to discuss school policies and operations. This committee is similar to one at Carmine Elementary School.

This style of leadership not only gives the teachers more input into school-wide affairs, it also reduces the workload of the principal and at the same time provides a structured setting for the teachers to work in:

> She (the principal) is great on committees, oh boy, she has got everybody on committees, someone else is on playground committee, in charge of library problems, and she posts that list and she says if there is a problem in any of these areas see these people. She is a great organizer. And it is helpful, you know where to go, you sometimes feel like you are committeed to death on some things, but it is organized and you feel like you have some structure. For me, I like it, I know where to go and what to do.
>
> Teacher
> Baldy 10/3/79

Organizationally, Baldy School is the truest of all the study schools to the PHISD ideal of highly professional teachers responsible for self-contained classrooms. Favored by a stable population of high achieving students and by an active parent group, the school can afford relatively high teacher autonomy. In short, Baldy School epitomizes what a proper elementary school should be.

## Carmine Elementary School

Carmine School (student population 610; 44 teachers) is located in the only Black neighborhood in PHISD. The school was built in 1955 to house grades 1-12, and thus when the school became solely an elementary school, it possessed unique facilities, a well equipped gymnasium and auditorium and a separate art building, for example. This is the magnet school designated by the 1975 court order described above. While no extra Federal or state funding was allocated to the district to operate its enhanced program, called the Pacesetter Plan, PHISD nevertheless provided increased staff, more and newer instructional materials, and more options for students.

The plan was approved by the court on July 15, 1975 on the condition that PHISD could identify 250 white volunteers by the first of August--14 working days away. "Since that time, school administrators have jested that this probably was the first time in history that a school district has had the opportunity to run a '14-Day Special Offer'," is the way that ruling is officially encoded in the PHISD Elementary Handbook. Comments regarding "throwing together" a school were not uncommon. Two principals were assigned to the school. One (a black man) had previously been principal of the school, but henceforth his duties were to be operations and maintenance and his title Administrative Principal. The other principal was a white woman who had previously been principal of another school and a consultant in the district. Her title was Instructional Principal. The staff consisted of a psychologist, 2 counselors, 5 resource teachers, music, art and spanish teachers, 2 P.E. teachers, 30 classroom teachers, 17 teaching assistants, an administrative assistant, 2 secretaries and a public relations person.

Compared to the other elementary schools in the district, Carmine has a significantly enlarged staff (e.g., other elementaries do not have music, art teachers for primary grades). Because of the unique construction of the school, the organization of the grade level classrooms is also different from that in other elementary schools. The kindergarten and 1st grade classrooms are located in a separate rectangular building--connected to the school only by a walkway. The second and sixth grade classrooms are in the two wings, and third, fourth, and fifth grades are located in the main hall, separated from second and sixth by the cafeteria, principals' offices, gym, and library.

The school also offers individualized instructional aids not found in the other elementary schools in the district. Each grade level possesses a computer with a math program that can be adapted for each child's skill level. Students are pulled from classes for a short time each week to use the computer in building their math skills. System 80, another individualized instructional aid, is available in one of the two resource rooms. System 80 builds reading and math skills by use of visual and auditory mechanisms. All first and second grade students spend 20 minutes a week with this unit; use by older students depends on need, which may be for remedial work or enrichment. There are other amenities: more money for field trips, film projectors, video tape recorders, a special "alternative room" where students who do not behave can have time-out, and an extended day program that provides instruction in sports and arts before and after regular school hours. The proliferation of study spaces and program results, however, in a great deal of student movement, and teachers are chosen partly on the basis of ability to deal with this constant movement. One assistant teacher remarked that she did not want a teaching position at the school because, "you have to be too flexible, students are coming and going out of the classroom all the time, your schedule is constantly interrupted."

Carmine is the only elementary in PHISD to employ assistant teachers to any extent. They are required to have teaching certificates and in some cases prior experience. Two assistant teachers are assigned to a grade level and their duties are determined by the classroom teachers on that grade level. They, along with the special education teachers, make possible increased individualized instruction that is characteristic of Pacesetter.

In the spring of 1979, the instructional principal resigned and the administration of the school was changed and enlarged. The administrative principal was promoted to central administration, and new staff was brought in. The new head of the school was given the title of Executive Director, coequal with the four existing Area Executive Directors (in effect PHISD made the magnet school "an area"). Two assistant principals were assigned instructional responsibilities for primary and intermediate grades respectively. The director of extended day was assigned more responsibility, including maintenance and operations, and promoted to assistant principal. Carmine now has 4 administrators for a student body of approximately 600 and a teaching staff of approximately 44 teachers, a number of assistant teachers, aides, and special education and special area teachers. The change has brought alterations in appearance (e.g., new paint), new and more explicit duties for assistant teachers, tighter, more centrally controlling scheduling. The strict enrollment policy--100 students per grade, one half neighborhood, one half volunteers from other neighborhoods, one half girls, the other boys--remains, and volunteers must still sign yearly contracts to attend the school. Still, if these volunteers wish to leave the school before the end of the year, the court must review and approve the transfer. Still, too, because of the special programs and individualized attention, the school is quite popular with an enrollment waiting list through 1985.[6] Finally, for the five years of existence of the court approved plan, the racial mix has remained virtually equal and the school continues to provide desegregation for the district.

Duncan Elementary School

Duncan, (student enrollment 681; 29 teachers) the newest of our four sample schools, opened in 1974 in a development of expensive single family houses. Despite the housing crunch of the late 1970's, this part of Prairie Heights continued to grow. A major addition to the plant in 1977-78 nearly doubled the school's space, adding a 3-classroom and a 2-classroom complex, additional rest rooms, cafetorium, library, gym and a 45 x 75 foot roofed outdoor patio area for rainy day recess.[7] In 1978, the school population was swollen by an influx of pupils from apartment development south of the building. In one year, average class size rose from about 25 to over 30, and music and special education rooms had to be reassigned to regular classes. Music then moved onto the stage, making whole school assemblies impossible, though smaller groups could still gather, sitting on the floor in the library. Special education teachers crowded into a large closet intended for library storage. Finally, at midyear, three temporary buildings relieved the physical crowding, but not the large class size. Meanwhile, as a new school, Acorn, was being built to accomodate the apartment children, its principal-to-be-moved his desk and files into the library closet. Bad weather in the spring of 1979 delayed construction of Acorn, and for a few weeks there was talk of operating both Acorn and Duncan as separate schools within the Duncan plant in the fall.

Fortunately, this exigency was avoided. Acorn opened on time, the temporary classrooms at Duncan were removed, and Duncan classes, once again of reasonable size, occupied in fall, 1979, the spaces planned for them.

The school plant was originally open plan, consisting of 4, 3, and 2 classroom clusters without walls. Attempts to close these rooms, in "the year of the wall," resulted in two closed classrooms, one of which is used for special education, and the remaining rooms being partly closed by fixed walls that do nothing to block sound. The openness of the plant exposes teachers to comparison by their peers, by students, and, through them, by parents. Open design at once facilitates inspection by the principal and allows the principal to rely to a considerable degree on peer control among teachers who share a classroom complex. Interdependency among teachers in these grade level clusters is necessarily high. In consequence, small incompatibilities can burgeon into major problems; on the other hand, unusual opportunities open for productive teamwork. More than at other schools in our sample, Duncan teachers at a grade level share the work of planning. In many cases this cooperation appears to result in unusually well developed teaching units, elaborately executed room displays, and a daily give-and-take flexibility that maximizes spontaneity and use of resources. Standards of student behavior at Duncan are high. Always aware that they are surrounded by other people these children keep voices down with little obvious adult pressure. It was actually possible, one rainy morning, for instance, for one teacher to conduct a normal spelling lesson in one quarter of a 75 x 75 foot space while 90 children were at recess in the other parts of the room. Even more surprising was the ability of two classes of kindergarteners to treat as if it were brick an invisible line that completes the partition between their two classrooms.

Students at Duncan are all middle class, and practically all are Anglo, a category that, in Texas, includes a sprinkling of Japanese and

Chinese as well as Eastern and Southern European surnames among the predominating English, Scotch, and Irish. As one might expect, parents of these children are involved in school affairs.[8]

Duncan has the standard PHISD staff configuration: principal, classroom teachers, librarian, counselor, two special education teachers, one speech therapist, a P.E. teacher, a music teacher. The present principal took over a 2 year old operation with staff already selected, and there has been little staff turnover since her arrival.

Students at Duncan pursue the standard PHISD curriculum within the standard PHISD self-contained classrooms, albeit shorn of doors. Grouping by skill is for reading only, within homerooms except for grade 4. The three 6th grade teachers have chosen to specialize in reading, math, and social studies instruction, but they do not group students by skill even for reading. Their judgement is that 6th grade is too late for little "bluebirds" reading groups. They expect, and usually experience, relatively mature, self-directed behavior from Duncan students.

Duncan, in short, might be characterized as a school mainly shaped by its stable, middle class student population and experienced professional staff. The school has not allowed an open plan to dictate organizational patterns, but rather has learned to live with the extra strain the plant imposes while turning its potential for cooperation to the advantage of the instructional program.

## CONCLUDING COMMENT

Variations in student characteristics, student body size, administrative structure, and involvement by outsider groups (Courts and parents for example) all contribute to differences in the four sample schools.

Each school must respond to and organize for a slightly different set of factors within the standard format of the larger district organization. One of the schools, because of differing neighborhood residential patterns and resultant student characteristics, is not consonant with the popular image of PHISD. One operates under a court order that influences the everyday fabric of school life. The two others are most like the public image of PHISD schools, but even here there are differences in degree. While both have high parental involvement (as does the magnet school), the relatively open plant of Duncan encourages comparison and as we note in later sections of this volume, teachers respond by greater coordination, seeking, particularly in public displays, a relative sameness, a united front. Our interest, however, is not so much in differences as in similarities among these schools, their common features of classroom organization. Thus we do not present detailed, ethnographic case studies of each school, and we will not compare principals nor teachers with each other.

Our focus is on the common structural features and situationally relevant recipes for action that can be found in all four schools. Differences, in this context, provide illumination of the boundaries of standard practice and identify the points of order from which actors must depart to solve problems. While we cannot be sure that the differences we observed represent the range of variations available in elementary schooling, it is our conviction that the common recipes for classroom organization we observed are similar in other PHISD elementaries and perhaps other districts throughout the nation.

# CHAPTER II

## Footnotes

1. "Texas has two types of school districts, independent and common, each administering local affairs through a board of trustees. Independent school districts deal directly with the Texas Education Agency; common districts are supervised by elected county school superintendents and county trustees...The Texas Education Agency... administers the public school system." The executive head of the TEA is appointed by the State Board of Education, whose members are elected from the Congressional districts and charged with overseeing all public schools below college level. (Texas Almanac--1976-77.)

2. PHISD has 2 women assistant principals at the secondary level and no full principals among the 27 junior and senior high school administrators.

3. Reasons for elementary teachers' lack of concern with organizational structure can only be guessed at, since they are invariably surprised even to be asked about it. Contributing factors might include their training, which emphasizes psychology rather than politics, and the fact that they are almost all women, and so by tradition excluded from group that imagines, builds, lives within, and reckons achievement by their position in organizations. The perception of Prairie Heights staff that they work in the best system in their metropolitan region further encourages acceptance of things-as-they-are.

   On the other hand, the results of teachers' limiting their concern to the classroom can be observed. Their autonomy as professionals is hedged in by the organization. As a group, they have no control over whom they will teach and as we observed even state legislation giving them authority to expel unruly pupils is nullified by the organization:

   > A bill recently passed was highly touted by teaching associations and journals. Basically, it gives teachers the right to expel students from their classrooms without going through administrative channels. But at the faculty meeting the principal really got hot and told teachers _not_ to exercise this right. The administration and principals are warning teachers against it because it has never been tested. They feel it violates a student's Constitutional right to an education and that if a teacher expels a student, it won't be long before a parent takes the issue to court and has the law thrown off the books. The administration doesn't want its teachers embroiled in a court battle.

   Rather than in political action, then, the efforts of teachers to gain some control over the makeup of groups they teach result in individual maneuvers to get their just share of good students within schools.

4. Ten plans were submitted in all. Four desegregation plans were submitted by PHISD to the U.S. District Court. Three involved pairing Carmine with another school in our sample, Adobe Elementary, and using

various arrangements of grades to attain racial balance for both schools. Six other plans were also submitted--2 by the Justice Department, 4 from parent groups. One called for restructing attendance boundaries, eight used the pairing or clustering of schools concept.

5. Many of the pupils at Adobe wear door keys around their necks on a string, a fact noted by a policeman who visited 1st grade to take part in a Community Helpers unit. "You are wearing a sign," he told the children, "that says I'm home all alone after school."

6. Some grade levels, however, are not as full as others. Sixth grade, typically, has withdrawals as parents want their children to spend their last year in the neighborhood school. Parents believe that the child will make neighborhood friendships in this manner that can be carried over into junior high school.

7. This space, designed to extend the number of days when outdoor play is possible in a part of Texas with little snow and many rainy winter days that turn playgrounds to black gumbo clay, is not used as much as it might be. A hundred boys and girls at dodgeball in a giant concrete box open on two sides generate ear-splitting decibel levels.

8. Parents who had already helped to organize a PTA recorded the opening day of Duncan School in 1974, in an album of color snapshots now displayed in the school library. There have followed companion volumes covering school events up to the present: open houses, choir concerts, bike rodeos. Mothers raised money for the school by orgainzing tours through their newly built houses, and fathers have built impressive playground equipment and even classroom cabinets, amenities 1970s school construction budgets did not allow. Mothers working half-day shifts carry on the routine operations of the library.

9. This is the only school in our sample where the professional staff is made up entirely of women. Possibly in response to this circumstance, the male custodian at Duncan plays something of a host role, greeting each early morning arrival, visitors and children. He several times pointed out to us changes and features of interest, from the imminent arrival of roof beams for the temporary buildings to a 25 lb. jack-o-lantern he had carried into the building for one of the children. The librarian, too appears to play a greater than usual role, taking a leading part in planning PTA luncheons and making arrangements for assemblies.

# CHAPTER III

# LIMITS ON LOCAL AUTHORITY

Three major groups impact on PHISD and constrain district authority. Two of these are governmental provision of resources and government mandated school organization. The third, parents, is an important constituency in the eyes of the school district and thus can alter organizational arrangements at the local school level. For all of these predictable sources of pressure, the district and individual schools organize administrative responses (recipes) to demonstrate compliance. As a result, varying demands place constraints that shape the contours of the administrative structure and social organization of schools.

## STATE PROVISION OF RESOURCES

School districts in Texas are resource dependent organizations. They cannot generate internally all the materials necessary to sustain them and must depend on organizations in their environment for additional resources. For Texas school districts, some of these dependencies are mandated by law - for example, there are legal ceilings on local school tax rates; others are self-imposed - districts may seek grants to meet unusual needs or to fund special projects. The effects of this dependence are both direct and indirect. School districts' educational choices are constrained by state regulations, and the premises set by those regulations, accepted without serious question, determine the limits within which solutions to educational problems will be sought.

The direct source of state constraints on local decision-making is money. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) supplies half the money local districts spend, according to an enrollment-based formula. From the original premise of allocation based on enrollment, then, come enrollment based guidelines for teacher-student ratios, teacher-principal ratios, textbook distribution, even assumptions about particular districts' and specific schools' need for special aid to the educationally handicapped. In addition to state funds, schools receive funds from local taxes, pass-through Federal funds, and, in some cases, direct Federal grants. (PHISD, however, refuses to accept Federal money directly, although teachers use instructional resources provided by Region X and deaf pupils benefit from OE services). School districts are free, within taxing limits, to set standards higher than state minimums, but as the districts' chief source of funds, TEA has the power to impose, in effect, standards governing 1) curriculum and 2) staffing ratios.

### Curriculum, Textbooks and Time Allotment: Recipes for Reproducing Culture

The Texas Education Agency adopts textbooks from which local districts, and ultimately classroom teachers, are required to make their selection. Welton describes the adoption procedure and its effect on the publication and distribution of textbooks generally:

> THE POLITICS OF STATE-ADOPTED TEXTBOOKS
>
> Like it or not, many educational publishers aim their materials toward two states, Texas and California. According to the folklore, if publishers can get their materials adopted by these two states, most of their production costs will be paid. Whatever texts they sell in the other forty-eight states represent mostly profit.

> In Texas, for example, a state committee recommends a certain number of books, usually five, from among all the textbooks published for a subject area and grade level. That committee operates under extremely strict rules; committee members cannot, for example, be treated to expense-paid vacations or anything else that might influence their judgment. The state then purchases large quantities of the approved books and stores them in state textbook depositories.... When local school districts decide which of the approved books they wish to use, they apply to the state for the books they need. The state then lends the textbooks to the local school districts which, in turn, lends them to students. Whenever a local school district decides to change texts, all the old books must be returned to the state.
>
> Texas's system has an interesting effect on textbooks sold across the country. Among educational publishers, Texas tends to be regarded as a conservative state, educationally speaking. As a result, publishers are sometimes cautious about introducing too many innovations into their materials lest one of them offend someone on the state selection committee. As a result, the criteria they sometimes use in judging their texts is "Will it sell in Texas?" (Welton 1979: 330-331)

The extension of the textbook adoption process at the district level is described below by a PHISD principal:

Principal:

> Oh, yes, the adoption procedure. There is a state textbook adoption committee and they pick out about 16 textbooks. It is a laborious situation. And, those are handed down to a district level textbook committee. And then there is a sub-team committee and the sub-team committees operate if it is an elementary reading, primary reading program. Then all the primary teachers in the district get together, and they go through a laborious process and they cast their ballots on five; it comes down to five. Out of the five, they choose which one or if they want a multiple adoption, then that's recommended to the committee and once that adoption is made, that is what you use.

State adoption procedures are legitimated in both the equity principle and the principle of cultural reproduction. Given that education is a state function, what is to be reproduced, culturally, is its purview.[1] The range of adoptable textbooks is thus fixed with this in mind--the legitimacy of the state to decide what is culturally relevant. Secondly, though, comes the notion that school districts should have equal shares of the cultural materials by which to operate.

Ironically, the adoption system does not ensure abundant resources nor even full use of those provided. Individual schools may have on hand only a few books that teachers want to use or that the children are ready for. According to the state formula, for instance, schools are allocated one first grade text for each student enrolled in the first grade - without considering that there are often many other students in a school reading on first grade level or that first graders themselves vary widely in the rate at which they can move through the levels of reading instruction. Texts for other grades are similarly provided, without consideration for the norm of taking every student from where he is. (teacher's conception of Equity/fairness) The scramble for resources that follows from such discrepancies is described thus by one principal:

> Principal: If we wind up with two Social Studies teachers who really like teaching from the same book, then on the percentage we have we can't supply both of them with the books.
>
> Researcher: Yes. The percentage is that you buy X number of the first choice purchase. Do you know what the percentage is?
>
> Principal: There are some we get a hundred percent on, others we get sixty percent, and sometimes forty percent, fifteen percent...something like that. It never works out is what I'm trying to tell you. For instance, this year I bought pre-primers myself for my own school.....

Researcher: You mean out of your budget?

Principal: Uh-huh, because it's such a hassle for them to try to share their percentage of books. It never works out when your oral reading group is throggh and it's time for the next one and she's not through with hers across the hall. And so, that in itself is a hassle.

State influence over instruction extends beyond textbook adoptions to requirements for teaching specific "concepts" and detailed time requirements for instruction in various academic subjects. A principal gives her assessment of this extension:

Principal: The state adopted materials which are the basic ingredients of any elementary school in Texas are a "given". There are so many "givens," I can use that word without....The time allocations, the textbook, and even like in Social Studies, identifying the concepts, generalizations that you should teach. When a child has completed 6 years in a Texas elementary school, they will have been exposed to these concepts of economics, social studies, social science, all these kinds of things. So, you are pretty well locked in. That is not true back East. An individual building can adopt its individual text. Not Texas.

In the case of mandated concepts (which have ranged from personal hygiene to map reading), compliance by teachers is roughly proportional to the materials-resources and recipes-provided. Normally these directives are accompained by teaching guides and occasionally by materials for classroom use. However, where teachers must conduct their own preparatory research or produce their own teaching materials, the concept in question is likely to be slighted. TEA, according to the teachers and principals in our study schools, makes no attempt to evaluate local instruction in these special topics.

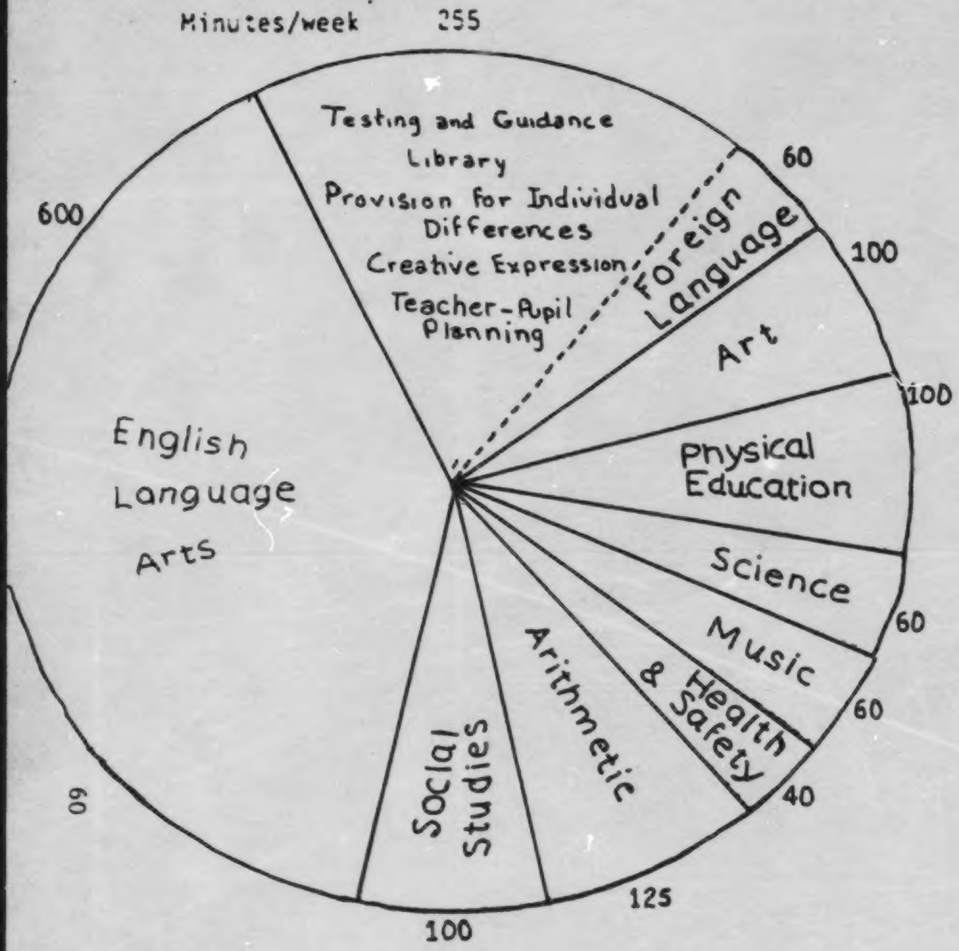
While TEA does not inspect for compliance with its minimum time requirements these are closely adhered to . Figure 1 diagrams the current state requirements for primary and intermediate grades. PHISD local guidelines add to this base significant increments in reading and arithmetic, but they hold to its pattern of relative emphasis on fundamentals, lack of emphasis on the arts.

Two forces appear to account for the relatively close correspondence between state and local time priorities. One is simple and direct. Texts are furnished by the state in proportions that match the assigned time periods. A typical elementary classroom shelves a hundred or so reading texts, including basals, supplementaries, and any "out-of-adoption" texts the teacher may have managed to hold on to. In addition, there will be spellers, grammar texts, paperbacks, library books - in all, a substantial collection, one in keeping with the one-third time share language arts command. A set of arithmetic texts to supplement those kept in student's desks may fill a few more feet of shelf space (1/6 share), and a similar space will accomodate science, health, and social studies together. Taken-for-granted in this distribution scheme, of course, is the premise that learning will correspond to time and resources made available. It is assumed too (but not checked) that students in a given class have absorbed an appropriate amount of information incrementally and that when they move on to the next class, the shelves of texts awaiting them will meet their needs. Whether or not that is true, it is certain that teachers, pressed for time and energy, use whatever is available, if it is attractive or even reasonably acceptable. The state textbook adoption

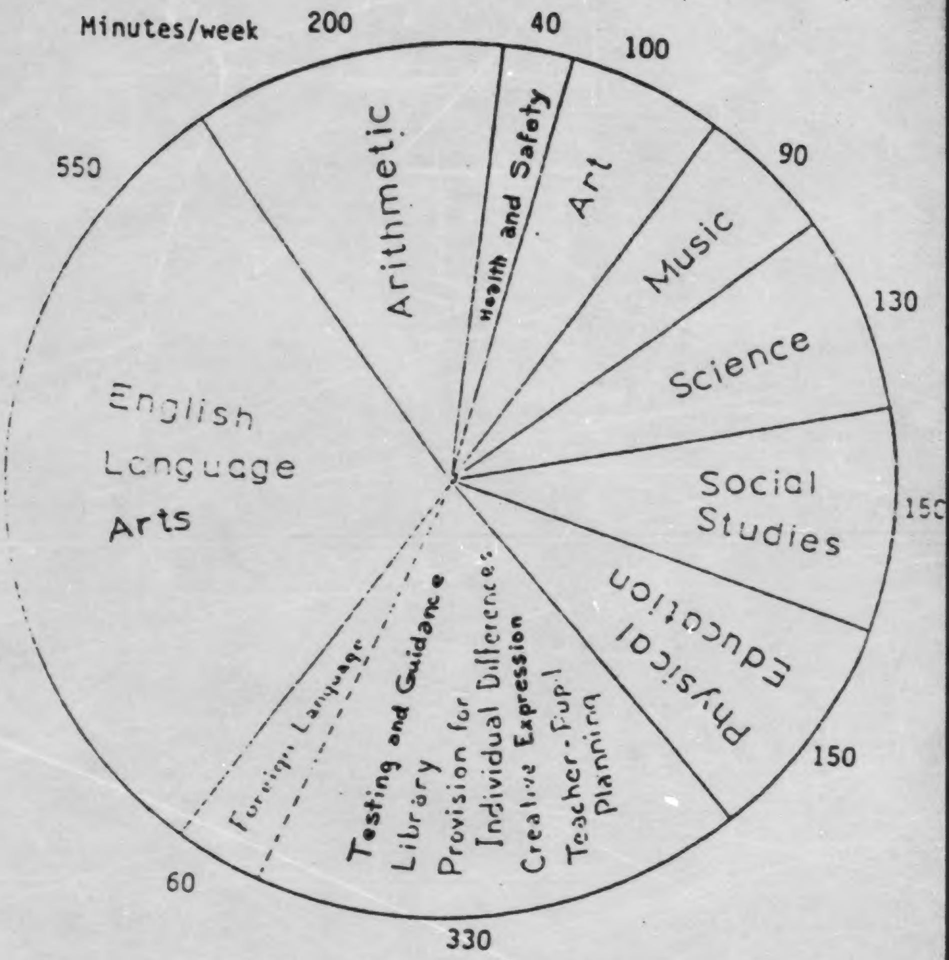
FIGURE III-1

Time Allotments--PHISD Elementary Curriculum

PRIMARY GRADES - MINIMUM: 25 HRS. PER WEEK



INTERMEDIATE GRADES - MINIMUM: 30 HRS. PER WEEK



These charts show graphically the minimum amount of time allotted to each of the areas in the elementary curriculum.

system has been designed to provide just that acceptable package (with its built-in time priorities) in every classroom. Teachers are theoretically free to create their own materials, but on the whole, they conform to the state's expectations.

One principal summarized the situation in this way:

Principal: Don't ever forget, though, that really when it comes down to the bottom line, what influences what a teacher does in her lesson plans is what the teachers' manual says. Unfortunately, we have allowed as a profession for the publishing companies to hire professional people to write textbooks who write a teachers manual and it becomes very easy to become a slave to that teachers manual.

Researcher: You mean a teacher's manual for the textbooks....

Principal: Which says "Now the next day you do thus and such...", you see. I mean the Spelling book...you know, the old joke was "Well, what week of school is it, I don't know, what lesson in Spelling are we on". If its Unit 27 you know it's the 27th week of school. I can take you to schools and regardless of what the aptitude test would say about their classes or this group or this individuals strengths or weaknesses, unless you are an extremely dedicated person to the individualized instruction, it becomes very easy to say "OK, the next Unit that we are going to study is this and these are the activities and this is the test you are going to take".

A more subtle force reinforcing adherence to the time guidelines is general acceptance of the priorities they represent. Differences of opinion about academic emphasis and adaptations of routine to special circumstances all tend to be settled within the framework given. Normally, teachers use the time requirements as an idealized base from which to organize their teaching.[2] The widest departure from the guidelines we observed occurred in response to a rapidly shifting student population at Adobe School. But even here, as he maneuvered to circumvent regulations, the principal's intent (and achievement) was to implement their priorities. Test scores were dropping precipitously. As the principal viewed the problem, "Why should we be teaching them geography (according to the state mandated curriculum), when they can't read?" Accordingly, the principal, with the agreement of teachers, shifted time allocations to permit more reading instruction.[3] Meanwhile he sought additional funding from the state, citing educational deprivation at his school, in order to implement an intensive, individualized reading program at grades one to three. His request was supported by the school district. In January, 1979, the state approved funds for a six month trial of a new reading program, called Key Vocabulary, which then replaced the state adopted basal readers for those children whose reading scores were very low and could be used to supplement the basal programs for other students. Six classroom aides were hired to work with the children one-to-one. Teachers and students responded enthusiastically. Ultimately, however, local dependence on state resources terminated the program. When the state cut Adobe's compensatory education allotment from 6 aides to 1, district efforts to fight the cut were unavailing. Without extra help, Adobe teachers were unable to continue this demanding individualized instruction. When, as in this case, a hard choice has to be made between fulfilling the intent of the regulation--Teaching Reading First-- and merely conforming to the letter, lack of resources dictates the outcome.

## Recipes for Staffing

The state education agency funds schools according to a graduated formula (recipe) that averages about one teacher to twenty-five pupils overall, with a smaller ratio for grades K-3. In effect, this ratio is binding on local districts, virtually none of which is wealthy enough to pay teachers entirely from local tax receipts. The result of the formula for classroom organization is near universal reliance on "batch" methods of teaching. Similar constraints on district discretion result from the state's funding limit of one principal to about thirty teachers. The normal staffing configuration within this context (in PHISD coupled with the neighborhood school concept) becomes, regardless of local preferences or student characteristics, 25 students, 1 teacher; 30 teachers, 1 principal. Thus, through the formula, enrollment sets up its own teaching and administrative structure including Special Education Staff, Counselors and Secretaries. The rationale that legitimates the state's recipe for funding is the principle of equity interpreted to mean equal share/equal burden. Viewing the children, enrollment, as the burden a particular school must bear, the funds provided are the shares by which the job is to be done. Importantly, however, equity takes on a batch education organizational form, and by force of the activities generated in line with this form, results in "schooling" and effectively sets the overall contours of classroom organization as well as the range of practical and possible actions concerning coordination and control.

Beyond its normal influence on school organization, the state recipes can, in unusual circumstances, direct local ingenuity from the problems of organizing for effective teaching to the challenge of maximizing local shares of state revenue within the limits of the formula. Such a case occurred, for example, in PHISD, when attempts were made, over the objections of principals, to set up "combination classes" (classes that combine two grade levels in a single classroom). As one principal explains, the idea for the classes is not innovation in instruction or revolution of curriculum, but is directly related to state funding and fiscal problems:

> **Principal:** It is sort of a hot issue in most places. It has come about in trying to decrease pupil/teacher ratio and still live within the budget, so what happens is, where we get to a school where we have too many children in the second grade and too many children in the third grade and yet not quite enough to qualify having another teacher in each of those grade levels, we combine....
>
> **Researcher:** Oh, so it's really....it's not an innovation designed....
>
> **Principal:** That's our complaint! You know, if it will stand on its own merits, then let's do it in places other than where we have to do it. On the whole, parents do not like it and the administration.... this has been a big issue between principals and central administration.

Under central administration pressure, a committee of Area Directors and Senior Consultants was formed to prepare Guidelines for Combination Classes. Criteria for selection of teachers and students, procedures for setting up classes, and necessary authority lines were established. Input from principals was sought, though at a later stage. Significantly, the major precipitant for the creation of these classes and all the additional administration and bureaucracy needed to manage and create rules for them was not locally felt need but the state funding allocation formula or, more generally, constraints on available resources. In this situation, rather than risk any loss of state money, district administration imposed an unwelcome arrangement on principals, teachers, and parents. Whatever the circumstances, it seems, school officials do not question the necessity for shaping policy within the limits of state staffing formulas; however, what they do concern themselves with is maximizing their equal share. Dependence on the state resources, along with acceptance of the state's enrollment-based premises, rules out alternative responses.

## Providing for Exceptions

For those children who can be unambiguously defined as "exceptional," deviation from the standard pattern is permitted in fact as well as in theory. For them the state provides generous resources, through a program called Plan A. The resources are given, however, only on condition that stringent eligibility standards be met. Qualifying disabilities include deafness, blindness, disabling orthopedic or other physical handicaps, emotional disturbance, mental retardation, speech handicap, pregnancy, slow development prior to age 6 (by far the most often used category in PHISD), Language and/or Learning Disability (LLD), informally called the Resource Group.[4]

In order to certify eligibility, schools conduct elaborate ceremonies, called Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) meetings, records of which are preserved in quintuplicated documents.[5] The members of these committees, which exist in all PHISD elementary shcools, vary according to requirements of the case under consideration. By law they must include at least three staff members. In practice, those likely to attend are the principal, counselor, diagnostician, Resource and/or other special teachers, as appropriate, the classroom teacher who has recommended placement, and, if possible, the parents of the child whose case is being reviewed. Meetings concerning any one student are likely to last 30 minutes to an hour, and batteries of such meetings are scheduled end-to-end, one day a week, in most schools. In cases where placement is centralized, classes for the severely handicapped (clustered for the whole Prairie Heights district at one school, Comanche) are being considered, Central ARD committees (CARD), including Comanche and district staff, participate. One Plan A teacher estimates that merely to prepare papers for these meetings consumes one-fifth of her working time. Three factors account for the scale of these efforts.

First is the symbolic role of ARD in demonstrating the school's concern for and response to individual need. (This aspect is discussed in the Grouping chapter.) The link between elaborate response and state resource for the provision is, in one sense, merely technical. As the state requires accounting for the receipt of textbooks (but does not inspect to see that they are used), so the state requires evidence of technical eligibility for special help (but does not concern itself with the acutal program). Second and more importantly, documentation is required because placement in Plan A constitutes labeling a child as non-normal in some respect, however minor. In such a sensitive area, the school district is responsible both to the parents and to the state for unquestionably correct procedure. Correctness requires both documented fact (paperwork) and credible ceremonies (ARD).

## FEDERAL INVOLVEMENT

Beginning with its involvement in 1971 as defendent in a Federal desegregation suit and continuing today as the Fifth Circuit Court monitors the school district's compliance with a 1975 desegregation order, PHISD has been subjected increasingly to Federal (in addition to state) constraints on its operations. Federal courts obviously bring a legal perspective and therefore a variant interpretation of the shared axial norms, cultural reproduction and equity. Specifically, the courts have required of PHISD actions to promote a national norm of equal opportunity as integrated education and equity as extra effort in behalf of previously underserved minorities.[7] As a normative rather than administrative organization, the Court specified standards; practical interpretation in the form of recipes for action was left to local officials. Their solution: one magnet school for the entire district--Carmine. Such a neatly contained solution is possible in Prairie Heights because the relatively small size of its minority enrollment and the district's geographical compactness make busing white students to one central magnet a feasible alternative to dispersing minority students throughout the system. The solution has remained acceptable to the court for five years because it works.

The magnet pulls enough white students to maintain Carmine's court ordered student composition, 50% Black, 50% non-Black. The inducements offered parents of white volunteers are smaller classes, a somewhat enlarged academic program, and full day child care. Carmine's teacher/pupil ratio is 16/1, compared to 20.2/1 for the other PHISD elementary schools. The school is the only one in the district to offer specialist-taught art, P.E., and Spanish in all six grades, a computer terminal capable of supporting programs for both remedial drill and accelerated math, and a library enlarged to offer rich resources to non-readers as well as advanced readers. Further, its Extended Day Program offers supervised play and activities from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Providentially, the same programs benefit neighborhood children, who are likely to need extra help, and volunteers who want accelerated instruction. Extended Day is enthusiastically received by neighborhood mothers, who may need low cost day care, and by volunteers, who frequently want extra sports and arts training for their children.

Having designed such an enhanced program in response to the court's command to attract volunteers to Carmine, the district followed up by devising a unique administrative recipe to manage the added work. Where the state formula would have called for one principal, Carmine was assigned two, one black (male) and one white (female), fulfilling at once the ceremonial need to have represented both black and white authority and the practical need to supervise an inordinately heavy staff. For besides the two principals (since the summer of 1979 increased to four- 2 white, one male, one female: 2 black, one male, one female), Carmine is allotted above the standard formula two teaching assistants per grade level, a full time (rather than the usual part time) counselor, nurse, educational diagnostician, and psychologist. As will be discussed below (in "Why Classrooms are Not Inspected"), Carmine's unique administrative configuration has led to generally tighter control. The production of a new cultural pattern, racial and social class integration, clearly calls for non-traditional adminstrative recipes, recipes that must ultimately be imposed by central authority rather than left to on-the-spot interpretation in the tried and true way.

The norm of equity, too, in this situation, receives an interpretation exceptional at this level in the bureaucracy. Fairness to two powerful constituencies, black plaintiffs in the desegregation suit and white volunteers, takes precedence over the ordinary bureaucratic norm of equity as sameness. This exceptional interpretation is called for by the situational power of these two groups. The one can threaten renewed litigation (though at high cost to themselves) and the other (at negligible cost) can threaten to pull their children out of Carmine and back to their neighborhood schools. Each can in its way threaten to overturn the magnet school solution and thus pose the unacceptable possibility of system-wide desegregation. The exceptional interpretation of equity is not challenged by other schools in the system because the unique nature of Carmine is recognized in law. There is no possibility that other district schools, however needy, can successfully claim resources on this scale.

The pressures applied by Federal courts, and through the courts by parents, have brought quick and far reaching changes in one elementary school. This has apparently occurred mainly because the mechanism of Federal influence differs fundamentally from that of the state. Threat of inspection and direct intervention, not provision of funds, motivates district compliance. Strengthening the force of Federal mandates, of course, is the relatively small scale of the response demanded. Finally, the mode through which, in practice, the mandate operates, the need to cultivate parent approval, is congruent with the district's values and with its normal way of doing business. To a lesser degree than at Carmine, perhaps, the need for parent and more generally community support influences the ways district administration and professional staff in all the schools can organize their work. Parents and community as sources of support and constraint will be discussed in the final section of this chapter.

## PARENTS AND THE COMMUNITY AS RESOURCES AND CONSTRAINTS

Schools as public agencies are open to public scrutiny. Parents, individually, as PTA members and as members of other community organizations, can and do have a strong impact on the school system. Often the influence comes at the individual school level, where parents have the greatest investments in observing and in requesting change. It is also at this level in the bureaucracy that parents can have the most impact, assuming their demands do not conflict with policies of TEA and PHISD. As might be expected, community and parent demands do not conflict with the institutional norms of cultural reproduction and equity. Only their situational perspective - that of outsiders or, in the case of parents, outsiders with a special stake in the treatment of their own children - differentiates parents' priorities from those of system insiders. Prairie Heights parents are well educated. Culturally, on the average, they are perhaps a shade more conservative than school professionals. They press demands for basics insistently and successfully, as can be seen, for instance, in PHISD's strengthening of state required emphasis on reading and math. On the whole, PHISD community pressure for basics involves demands for thorough grounding in learning skills, not know-nothing disapproval of modern "frills." For Prairie Heights parents also demand excellence. They have come to Prairie Heights, in many cases, believing that PHISD schools offer the best education in the area, and they intend to see that their children benefit from it. (This is true, incidentally, of working class parents in the Adobe neighborhood, who are also moving up, as it is of parents who buy luxurious custom homes in the Baldy zone.)[8]

About equity, parent's views can occasionally differ from those of principals or teachers, as will appear frequently throughout this report. Differences arise when the parents' justified demands are seen by principals as interference with professional judgement, perhaps, or a teacher's need to balance the demands of 28 students is seen by parents of one as failure to individualize instruction. Out of such differences of opinion, in part, arises the school's need to "manage" parents. For from the perspective of the school, parent involvement must be managed. Parent penetration must be confined to authorized areas. (Normally, classroom instruction is not among these.) Moreover, parents must be insulated from leakages of information discrediting to the "myths and ceremonies" conveyed to the public. Stated in another manner, these influences and leakages of potentially discrediting information must be controlled and be kept from having direct impacts on classroom instruction. With regard to parental participation in schools, official organizations such as the PTA are legitimate ways to effect parent involvement and simultaneously limit it. While membership in the PTA is not easy to manipulate because of external factors influencing families to join or not join, participation in PTA activities and meetings can be influenced. Parents "show-up" at "open house," "meet your teacher nights," and other such affairs, and these can be and are routinized. PTA meetings are routinized, and since the agenda and program is set to some degree by the principal, attendance can be encouraged or discouraged in subtle but effective ways. For example, PTA programs that present performances by students from a given grade level are attended disproportionately by parents of children from that grade level. It is possible for a school to have a small number of such programs or alternatively a rather large number, thereby influencing attendance at PTA.

There is, however, a necessity for some parental participation as volunteers for various programs which would be difficult if not impossible to carry through without parental aid. Thus schools must seek to balance their need for parents against the potential problem of too much penetration by parents. Conditions at our four study schools illustrate the problem: one has too little parental involvement (is resource deprived), another too much (resource abundant), while the remaining two have reasonable matches between their needs and parental participation. Adobe school must curtail some activities (e.g., fieldtrips) because it cannot find enough parents willing to participate. Adobe seeks then to "balance" its needs for parents against the available supply. On the other end of the scale, Carmine school is inundated with parents. Indeed it appears that the school has had to create activities for parents from the more standard "building of playgrounds" to the more esoteric "Operation Childsafe" (a program to make sure children who are coming to school get there safely). Carmine's enrollment is regulated under a federal court order for desegregation, and parents of volunteer students are very active in their children's education and have a stake in maintaining the operation of the school. According to one of the principals at Carmine, parents in many instances have acted as monitors to ensure that programs established under the guidelines were operating. To maintain boundaries between parents' and teachers' domains, thus asserting professionalism and maintaining instructional recipes, school s taff have occasionally invoked standardized "District Policy" in response to particularistic demands.

Baldy and Duncan Schools, whose need for parent involvement roughly matches that offered, differ from each other not in kind but only in degree. Both have the parent manpower they need to build playground equipment and staff the library. Beyond that, Duncan, a newer school lacking amenities such as closets and shelving in classrooms, channels parental energies into building projects. Baldy school has an active PTA. The school recently won the PHISD award for having the highest proporation of parents, 180% of pupil enrollment, signed up for PTA. The school provides a few volunteer programs and the parents are willing but not overbearing. Extra-curricular events, such as neighborhood carnivals and potlucks are provided so that parents and children can participate together. The school is viewed as being "part of the community."

Thus the schools attempt to manage parental involvement in their everyday affairs. On the one hand, some involvement appears necessary; on the other, it must be limited to peripheral areas of school life.

Parents, for their part, are either unaware that they are managed, too pressed for time to care, or tacitly go along with existing arrangements. The direct help parents can contribute to classroom instruction - given existing organizational arrangements - is minor. Even highly desired help such as building projects have had to be shelved for lack of organizational support. One father's presentation of a bill for $100, from which he had created a first class puppet theater, for example, exhausted the principal's discretionary project funds for the entire school year, and further such offers were declined. By contrast, parents' potential for causing problems is formidable. At the individual school level, they can complicate grouping arrangments (See Grouping chapter for discussion.) At the district level, they can overturn, at least temporarily, curricular decisions.[9] These forms of pressure are trivial, however, when compared to the power of parents to remove their children from the schools. This is the ultimate threat parents have, for the exodus of the children shrinks funding, and thus parents must be made to believe that the shcools are doing the best for their children.

Similarly, the force of the Federal court order, which puts the burden of compliance on the district's ability to satisfy parents of student volunteers at the magnet school, adds to parents' potential for disruption.

## CONCLUDING COMMENT

While the state education agency has elaborate funding formulas based on enrollment that, in effect, set administrative structure, federal pressure on PHISD has the result of elaborating traditional organization. Administrative structure is supplemented, instruction is bolstered and enrollments carefully constructed. For PHISD the failure of its desegregation plan would result in a severe reorganization of things as they are, something which the district does not desire. Parents as an external press are both a resource and a source of trouble. Like state funds and Federal intervention, parent inquiries require schools to organize formal responses. All of these constraints ultimately come to rest heavily in the office of the principal at each school. The ways in which principals manage to make do between the realities of their organizational life and the ideals they pursue and the effect of these activities on the shape of school life form the subject of the next chapter.

## CHAPTER III

### Footnotes

1. One should note that education has not always been, nor currently is, only a state function. Other institutional components run schools, but for the young, the only other notable institution is the Church. There an additional set of rules are added to state requirements as to what is reproducable.

2. All teachers, principals and other district administrators know the guidelines in general, but a surprisingly wide range of specific minutes for various subjects was cited to us authoritatively.

3. Inspection that would result in strict adherence to the state plan is absent, which can result, as in this case, in local school adaption to its community. Even if inspection would allow for departures, there would surely be additional administrative work in order to document the need. Here too, the local school officials demonstrate their fundamental commitment to the needs of the children in a scheme that has at its core fairness in the teaching process.

4. To simplify a complex admission formula, the Resource group is made up of children who perform below grade level in language or mathematics. The deficiency needed to qualify is 6 months below grade level in 1st grade, 1 year below in 2nd or 3rd, 2 years below in 4th, 5th, and 6th (a PHISD policy). Furthermore, according to state guidelines, a child must be achieving at a level one standard deviation below that predicted by his IQ score.

5. The meetings, paperwork, and record keeping involved are examples of what Meyer and Rowan (1978) term "ritual classification" and over which the schools exercise relatively tight control.

6. The word "Anglo" in Texas means anyone who is not Black or Chicano. In informal usage, the term includes Japanese professionals but not Vietnamese immigrants. In the context of schools, a working definition might be, "any child whose parents speak Standard English".

7. This is to say that the federal court has a specific idea of what kind of culture it wants reproduced in schools--one that is integrated.

8. Parents may not consciously consider - they may not even know - that equity-based state formulas set strict limits to possible variance in local school expenditures. This is the other side of provision and demonstrates the idea of sameness as legally enforced. School districts, who might by local taxes be able to provide a quantitatively (and presumeably qualitatively) better program are denied the license to do so. State law restricts school district taxing authority by setting permissable rates of taxation. Thus, wealthy districts are kept from outdistancing poor ones, equity as sameness is relatively maintained. But given these fact, how does it arise that one school

district is better than another--that a child gets a better education? One can argue that the personnel make the difference, that smaller (or larger) classroom sizes make the difference, or that the social characteristics of the children make the difference. In any case, the test scores and perceived achievement of the original school population generates a reputation for the district (which it may not have any right to claim). Contrived by a tract home developer who builds to a zoning board specification (in Paririe Heights proper the zoning board is volunteer and composed of community people who do not want nor desire anything resembling low cost housing), the social class levels of elementary schools can be set outside state law. Combined with the neighborhood school concept, in practice this means that student characteristics can be stabilized into acceptable ranges. The school district can take credit for (it may earn it too, we cannot say) the success. And the success generates a myth about the district which further attracts the right kind of people who want the right kinds of education for their right kind of children--even though the resources are not that much different.

9. In PHISD recently a small group of citizens has succeeded for a second year in banning from classroom use two controversial film series. This effort is part of a persistent drive to limit classroom instruction to basic education, a drive which has brought into being review committees and teacher workshops among the district attempts to respond.

# CHAPTER IV

## BALANCING AND BUFFERING: THE EVERYDAY WORK OF PRINCIPALS

Principals are authoritative and symbolic figures who are responsible to diverse constituencies and must be attentive to formal appearances and impressions. Their major constituencies are the central administration, teachers, parents, and the children; each group makes demands for performances that reify important institutional values. However, these pressures and demands are made on principals by participants differently located positionally and situationally, and principals must buffer and balance varied interpretations of goals and plans for action. In principals' offices sameness is reconciled with fairness in an equitable manner. They are responsible for production and reproduction of essential ceremonies of the institution especially when outsiders must be attended to.

The vast majority of children view the principal as higher authority.[1] For children who have committed some untoward act, principals have real and practical presence, while for most others they are symbols of authority. A visit to the principals' office signifies the gravity of offenses and to the child presents a united front of teacher and principal. Similarly, for parents, principals represent the authority of the school. Simply put, someone who is in charge and running the show. Such conceptions--that individuals are in charge and responsible--are most important to the formal appearances of the school as a socializing agency. Principals are believed to have powers to effect curriculum and instruction in the schools because parents have little or no idea about the constraints on administrative action. Most parents, when not in P.T.A., see principals to request a teacher change for their child or as a result of some untoward event concerning their child. Principals, as we indicated in the previous chapter, are thus responsible for channeling parental concerns and buffering teachers and classrooms from undue interference.

Teachers want principals to buffer them from the demands of parents and administration so they can get on with the teaching/learning process. Central administration demands from principals accountability for schooling. But though principals perform this juggling act with great artistry, they cannot insulate the two constituencies completely. Inevitably, given state constraints and bureaucratic demands for production teaching aspects of the schooling norm filter down to classrooms: texts are prescribed; purchase orders must be filed in quadruplicate. On the other hand, teacher culture is internalized in the very persons of superintendents and specialist: they were themselves trained as teachers and have served their stints in the classroom.[2] When interpretations of norms clash, assistant superintendents are not on the line. Principals are. The principal's job represents the quintessence of role conflict because it is in the principals' office that situational interpretations of core norms must be juggled.

As Bidwell indicates, the principalship "was first a set of clerical duties carried by one of the teaching staff, but after 1850, as curricular complexity grew beyond the scope of the superintendency, authority for curricular and instructional supervision was vested in the principal, who, like the superintendent, continued to be recruited from the teaching cadre."[3] Today, principals continue to be the chief administrative officers of local schools, and for the majority of elementary schools, they do it alone.[4] What has grown for principals is the administrative function as the institution of education became state supported and mandated, Federally supported and mandated, and bureaucratically organized. Principals, by the nature of their career lines, occupy two worlds. They share with teachers a culture and perspectives, while at the same time they are accountable to and share an administrative perspective. Given these two perspectives embodied in one person, it is not surprising to find that principals spend their time on both: being an administrator and being a colleague. Notably absent are the inspection of teacher work, teacher evaluation, and provision of instructional leadership. This is the typical result for a variety of reasons (which we explore in the next chapter). But briefly, principals' behavior corresponds more closely with teacher expectations (colleagial norms) of what they should do and with practical administration demands than with the official job description prepared by the district or idealized versions of their roles as instructional leaders. These are the people that they must interact with every day and whose expectations of competent performances must be satisfied within the larger normative structure of educational practice. Thus principals' time is consumed by interactions with those immediately above and immediately below, and on occasion outsiders (notably parents). The greatest part is spent talking with office staff, teachers, and students, supervising student behavior, attending principals meetings, and completing paperwork.[5] In the following sections we describe how the roles of the principal in school organization are shaped by the formal and informal expectations of administrators and teachers. Organizational reasons why classrooms are but superficially inspected are discussed in Chapter V.

# PRINCIPALS AS MANAGERS OF SCHOOLING:
# THE VIEW FROM DOWNTOWN

While the official description of principals' duties focuses on both instructional and administrative issues, the primary concern of the Administration is administration. The Administration's situational imperative, in other words, is to insist on principals' compliance with bureaucratic schooling norms. This interpretation of the norm is given ongoing realization through weekly meetings principals must attend. Here principals receive instructions concerning what aspects of their jobs to emphasize and what linkages are important to the district. Examination of the minutes and agendas of such meetings over the last two years gives some indication of Administration expectations. Principals' work activities on these matters provide another. Together they point to concern for record keeping and technical matters such as maintaining attendance and enrollment cards in proper order. Principals are expected to know what the issues are in upcoming bond elections so that they can, at suitable times, instruct parents on the need for funds. Attention is given to "progress reports"--reports to parents whose children are not making satisfactory progress--their proper timing, and to other reports sent to parents.

Outlining matters he felt new principals needed help with (September, 1977), the Superintendent named pruchasing, inventory, resource persons, and hazards (i.e., attractive nuisances, such as construction sites that could render the district liable to suit. Accounting and budget items come up frequently. Questions about practical application of state and district regulations appear regularly too: How can we get tuberculin skin tests for children from underdeveloped countries? What is the latest ruling on administering medication at school? What is appropriate dress for students? (The last was tossed back to principals, who know best what their neighborhood parents will accept.) When state regulations undergo drastic revision, as did Texas special education rules in 1977, principals need special training. In that case, four TV training sessions dealing with eligibility and the convoluted referral process were aired for principals and consultants. Besides these issues specific to schools, principals' meetings concerned the ordinary business of any organization, salaries, insurance, employee relations, and the like, all of which recur regularly.

When instructional items are discussed, virtually all are technical. It is decided that plusses and minuses will not be appended to report card grades. Sixth grade choir will miss 2 1/2 hours of instruction during the April Spring Festival, it is noticed in November, and therefore participantion must be limited. Sample textbooks are on display for "lay persons" as well as teachers, etc. Other instructional items underscore the Administration's reliance on principals to buffer discrepancies between parent and school interpretations of the cultural reproduction and equity norms. For example, principals' attention is called to the need for consultants as well as teachers to review instructional materials, especially films, before they are approved for classroom use. Similarly, the sensitive issue of special programs for the"gifted" required involving principals, who were admonished not to recommend students on IQ alone, but to have supplementary criteria prepared beforehand. In terms of the administration of instruction, principals are supposed to (1) assure that classes have required materials and texts, (2) develop a schedule which allows joint planning and participation in music and physical instruction and (3) make up class lists of students in an equitable fashion (i.e., distribute children with high academic ability and leadership skills, as well as those not so gifted, proportionately to all homerooms).

Further demonstrating their penchant for deflecting political pressure downward, administrators talking to principals stress public relations. Among the political issues dealt with at these meetings for example, was the neighborhood school policy, which the Board reaffirmed despite unbalanced neighborhood growth that has created several overcrowded schools as well as some underutilized plants. Prairie Heights principals are alerted, too, whenever federal policies or programs are considered. For any unnecessary involvement with the federal government is politically anathema. When parents demand federally funded benefits, therefore, such as mainstreaming the handicapped, pressure hits principals first, and their concern is voiced at these meetings. Recognizing the key role of principals is managing all aspects of relations with parents, the Superintendent once particularly stressed the value he put on that aspect of the principals' job. He called on the assembled principals to mark off 1/2 day each month for sending handwritten notes home about students--with no misspelled words!

One item among the many relating to public relations seems to epitomize the central administration's view. This concerned a program called School Health Room Volunteers. In this program (which exists in other Texas districts as well), volunteer mothers staff the health rooms (formerly called "nurse's offices") in neighborhood schools. The principals must, of course, deal with these ladies, keep them happy on a routine job at no pay, and get along without nursing services when the volunteers choose not to appear. The principal's payoff is that the school secretary will be relieved of band-aid detail "on a half day basis." Perhaps unconsciously delving several layers into irony, the administration proposed that the volunteers be given "20 hours of training in district policies and professionalism." The purpose of the program is to provide semi-skilled help at low cost. It was remarked, aside, that the program would provide a way to involve the community. In this, as in other examples, for the district, community concern is channeled away from the classroom out into public areas where the principals can handle it.[6] In school talk, the principal serves "as the spokesman for community awareness."

Viewed from downtown, then, principals serve as the representatives of central Administration out in the schools. Downtown Administration delegates little authority. Legally all authority resides in the Superintendent and the Board. While PHISD central Administration has formed administative teams of principals through which principals' views on several aspects of their jobs can be expressed, these operate outside the structure of line authority. This admisistrative view of principals as bureaucrats is accepted, too, by teachers, and thus acquires full legitimacy. In PHISD collegial demands reinforce bureaucratic demands to insure that principals will devote most of their effort to administration, maintaining orderly appearances in the schools' public spaces, and public relations.

# PRINCIPALS AS MANAGERS OF SCHOOLING: THE TEACHERS' VIEW

Principals' prerogative and duty to take charge in these matters (in fact, in all matters outside the classroom) is taken for granted by teachers. Teachers expect to be provided with everything they need for teaching: a clean orderly building, heated or cooled according to the season, adequate supplies. Arranging for these things to happen consumes a good deal of a principal's working time. Supervising maintenance workers, for instance is a continuing headache. When custodians are responsible, they can perform beyond expectations, as did the woman at Adobe who personnally covered the work of men who didn't show up or the male custodian at otherwise all female Duncan who, with the crossing guard, acts as host to visitors and fatherly overseer for the children. More often, these workers (paid the minimum wage) are unenthusiastic and their ineptness can result for example, in principals having to spend hours sweating over malfunctioning cooling equipment. Worse, district level maintenance employees can be sent in at the convenience of central administration and are not subject to direct orders from the building principal. (Thus painters interrupted classes at one school for weeks and even took over one heavily used activities room for their smoke breaks.) "60-70% of a principal's time goes to maintenance and operations", estimates one principal who has studied the matter.

Seeming to reject the bureaucratic role so completely that they disdain even to squabble over money, teachers leave the budget making too, to principals. And this can be a formidable task, particularly where the basis of the whole budgetary structure, enrollment, is upredictable.

As one principal explains, the responsibility for reconciling the needs of teaching/learning with those of bureaucratic equity as well as for absorbing the consequences of uncertainty for teachers and Administration is placed squarely on the building principal:

> They allocate teachers on projected enrollment. Our projection for next year is low, lower than what I think it is going to be. So I went over to the Ad Building and talked with the people concerned and they came up with what I think is a good idea on the money. Now they've set aside a sort of "slush fund." They said now, "Okay, we're gonna go on our projection, you're showing us where you think it might be higher and it might be but you know we can't give it to you now and let you spend it and then say give it back, so what we'll do is operate on the idea that the projection is correct, if opening day of school comes and you have 100 more students, we'll give you this many more dollars. Also we will allocate you so many teachers but don't assign them all yet." Which even last year I felt like we were over-projected and I did not assign all the teachers to classes to start with. I know I told this one teacher, we're just going to have you hang loose to see where the need is. See, our problem in this area is, our parents move in and out so much that you don't have any idea.

Teachers and Administration agree, too, that the principal is responsible for maintaining public order in his or her building. In an emergency, teachers want to feel that there is someone in charge - as do pupils, parents, and Administration. The fallout from a recent tornado warning amply demonstrates how pressures generated outside the school bear on the principal. When the lights went out at one school, several teachers converged on the office asking what had happened. Hearing that one principal was at lunch and the other out of the building, the teachers expressed resentment that no one was taking care of the shop. Teachers in another school wondered among themselves whether the principal was in touch with district administration, whether downtown was even aware of the situation.

Parents wanted to know whether to come for their children. Children wanted to go home. The eventual response from the district was a series of discussions and directives mandating tornado drills, promising efforts to install weather radio capability in all the schools, and several press releases. Basically unchanged in all the new procedures is the principal's role. When trouble comes, the principal has to respond. Among his or her other duties, that of allaying pupil, staff and parent anxiety ranks high.[7]

For the emergency that arises most often in classrooms, student defiance of teachers' authority, teachers expect backing. When they don't get it--in the form they prefer--they are apt to feel, as one teacher put it, "very much alone in the dark,..at sea alone in a boat." When serious misconduct occurs, teachers expect the principal to impose serious penalties--not a talking to, not allowing the child to cool off by running errands. The kind of action teachers recount with approval is that of a principal who responded to a teacher's phone call for help by appearing immediately in the classroom, throwing the offender over his shoulder like a sack of flour (ignoring screams of mistreatment and threats to sue), and taking him off to the office, where he phoned the child's mother and was told to spank him.[8]

Most of the time, certainly between emergencies, the principal keeps order by managing resources and interpersonal relationships in such a way that problems do not arise. They take steps to insure equity among teachers (discussed elsewhere) and to handle problems whenever possible on the spot ("My door is always open.") Above all they are visible, representing to children, teachers, parents, and visitors that established routines are being kept up, appearances are favorable, all is well. Everyone knows the principal by name and by sight. Principals make themselves visible and accessible by standing or walking in the corridors for some time every day. One principal starts the day by standing in the hall, each morning in a different spot, from 8:30 to 8:45. During this time, he is constantly greeting kids and being greeted by them. Many bring their problems to him for discussion on the spot, and if they can't be settled then and there, the students are told to drop in at his office. To a girl self-conscious about her clothes, he remarks about how nice she looks today; to a boy who doesn't always behave perfectly, he comments on the fine progress he's making in math. Another principal likes to conduct business with visitors while strolling the halls. Unlike most principals, she enters classrooms frequently, though just for a moment, usually, to bring messages, even to hand a teacher a paycheck. During the lunch hour, she eats a sandwich with one group of teachers, drinks her coffee with another, all the while talking with pupils, keeping an eye on lunchroom operations, then moving on, as the children finish, to the playground.

When we ask teachers what they expect of principals, even more often than backing on discipline, teachers answer, help with problem parents. Even the researcher's attempt to lead the answer toward instruction in the following extract cannot alter that priority:

| | |
|---|---|
| Teacher: | Oh, she is always around, she is marvelous. If you ever have anything, she is easy to drop in on and talk to, no problem at all. |
| Researcher: | And the things that you are likely to talk about are classes? |
| Teacher: | Or a parent problem or comments that you got from parents. She is a marvelous liaison between the faculty and parents. I mean if I were to ever get a glaring note from a parent saying "I don't agree with this or something or other," then I would go immediately to the principal. |

## PRINCIPALS FACE THE PUBLIC

Parents and the community must (if schools are to hold their credibility) be kept unaware of any conflict between bureaucratic and teacher interpretations of the axial norms. To the principal falls the task of presenting a public appearance of equality and fairness, accountability and responsiveness, control and professionalism. Principals are the better able to discharge this duty because, as we have seen, to a remarkable degree teachers and Administration agree about how schools should operate. This apparent agreement is based on an organizational arrangement that insulates the one group from the other, and crucial to this arrangement is the principal. He alone among the bureaucratic ranks talks with children every day. He alone among the building staff regularly meets with Administration. The skill with which the principal reconciles the demands of teachers and Administration deeply affects the ability of each to carry out its work. The success of principals in presenting to the public, especially parents, the image of a coordinated performance determines whether the school (and ultimately the district) will be perceived as outstanding and worthy of generous support or merely a public necessity to be kept on a short string and short rations. Recognizing the importance of parent support, PHISD makes strenuous efforts to cultivate good relations. The actual work of keeping parents happy is largely organized by principals according to their own special recipes, which include routines for involving parents in school affairs but limiting that involvement to acceptable areas (PTA), and for keeping parents well informed but keeping control of what information is released.

Principals take an active role in PTA, attending monthly meetings of the city-wide PTA Council, helping new officers learn the ropes each September, distributing the newsletter,[9] encouraging teachers to make an appearance at PTA functions, appearing themselves at the podium each month to express the school's appreciation for parents' efforts on its behalf. The sign that a principal has truly succeeded in nurturing a PTA is enthusiastic parent participation. Such success is indicated by the scene described here, A Spring Meeting:

> First of the three items of business was Installation of Next Year's Officers. A stunning array of 19 people filed to the front as their names were called, and each was bedecked with a paper lei. Presidents Jerry and Virginia, 1st VP Bill and Charlotte, 2nd VP Ned and Claudette, 3rd VP George and Susan, 4th VP Rannell and Joyce, 5th VP for Budget and Finance Jimmy and Judy, Secretary Pete and Lillian, Treasurer Dick and Charlotte, City Council Delegates Ray and Ann and John and Pam. (One of the men did not appear.) The President swore them all in, in a slightly tongue-in-cheek manner, and they took their seats.

Having a group of parents so organized, even if loosely, makes it at least possible for the principal to try to appeal to parents to act politically in behalf of the school. At one PTA gathering,

> The principal took the podium to express her concern about the state of education legislation in Austin this session, which she characterized as the worst for education in Texas history. She particularly singled out remarks by the Governor and his wife, which she felt

> showed they were not knowledgeable about public schools. (She did not say what remarks she referred to.) She believes teacher morale is terrible right now, and that their low pay contributes heavily to this problem. She acknowledged that most people in the neighborhood had voted for the Governor, but she urged them to consider the needs of the schools and write to their state legislators, a list of whose addresses she had available.

But there is more to PTA than ceremonial inclusion of parents in school activities. Their very solid accomplishment can be seen on many PHISD playgrounds: father assembled massive timber play equipment. Another school has acquired classroom cabinets and furniture through fathers' efforts. Where a school is deprived of father power, as Adobe for instance is, the district must pick up the tab for installing similar equipment (in the name of equity, of course), and the bill can be substantial. One principal estimates that the installation of towers and ramps on her playground came to 1000 hours of donated labor.

Principals are assiduous too in providing information to parents. They anticipate questions and are out ahead with the answers. Whenever any change is made in a child's school situation, even something as simple as moving from one homeroom to another, principals have to be prepared for parent reactions. In order to preempt unfavorable responses, for instance, one principal took time to write the parents of every child who was to be moved from the overcrowded main building to newly installed temporary classrooms nearby. The proportions that the parent management task can reach, in the hands of a skillful practitioner, can be seen in the following list of activities named by one principal as her formal program for improving home-school communications and relations. Though some of these tasks are delegated to teachers or to the librarian, the principal assumes responsibility for planning and follow-through. This list, while more elaborate than most, faithfully represents the relationship between principals (or, more generally, schools) and parents: (1) There will be full disclosure of pertinent information to parents and (2) the determination of what is pertinent and when, where, how, and by whom that information will be relayed is the prerogative of the school.[10]

Elementary School Goals 1978-79, "To Improve Home-School Communication & Relations."

1. Parent Information Sheet - Principal - 9/5/78 and all year as students move in.
2. Curriculum Guide summaries sent home with each child, grades 1-6 - Principal and Teachers - 9/12 to 9/28.
3. Parent meetings to explain program at each grade level, Principal and teachers, K-6. 9/12 to 9/28.
4. "How can I help?" sheets sent home so all parents have an opportunity to volunteer for needed services at the school. Principal, Teachers K-6. 9/12 to 9/28.
5. Mothers' coffees to discuss pertinent areas as needed. K-1, Sept. to June.
6. Letters to welcome children. Grade 1. August 25.
7. Citizenship reports to parents every Friday. Grade 1. Sept. to June.
8. Conferences with parents.K-6 K-2/yr, 1 2/yr, 2 1/yr, 3 as needed 4 1/yr, 5,6 as needed.
9. Program presented by children for parents. 1,3,6. Oct., Dec., Mar.
10. Supplementary readers sent home on regular basis so parents can see children's progress in reading.. 1,2,3. Sept. to June.
11. At least one positive note sent home to parents of each child. K-6. Sept to June.
12. Compliment grams given to children to share with parents. Teachers K-6, Sept. to June.

13. Monthly newsletter to parents. K teachers. Sept. to June.

14. Monthly newsletter to parents telling of happenings at school. K-6 Teachers, Principal, PTA.

15. Letters sent to parents of children who have been outstanding in some area. Principal. Sept. to June.

16. Compliment grams sent to children who have been outstanding in some area. Principal. Sept to June.

17. Certificates presented to children who have been outstanding in some area. Principal Sept 6.

18. PTA Programs, Principal
    Sept. Testing and Talents Unlimited
    Nov. Open House
    Dec. Xmas Program
    March Open House
    May Band and Choir program.

19. Assigned activities which require student-parent communication. K - 6

20. Parent involvement in helping students broaden awareness of news stories. 6th

21. Invitations to parents to view special student presentation in the classroom.

22. Letters sent home on regular basis telling of activities, etc., being planned for the next period. 1-3 teachers.

23. Parent workshops to make materials to use in classroom. K - 3

24. Phone calls to parents when necessary. K-6 teachers.

While the recipes principals follow in managing parent relations give an impression of free access, they also establish firm rules (which parents have no wish to contest) governing access. By tacit agreement, parent involvement is confined to matters affecting their own children directly or, when whole school matters are occasionally touched upon, parents are kept on the periphery, out of the classroom and away from influencing curriculum, or tampering with instruction.

We believe this happens because all parties accept (without articulating any such phrase) the pervasive logic of confidence, (see Meyer and Rowan, 1978). Parents want teachers to be responsible for educating their children. Therefore they must believe teachers have special expertise, special methods that overcome the resistance to study children exhibit all too obviously at home. For their part, teachers say they prefer to work with parents outside the classroom because parents wouldn't understand teachers' routines, which, of course, is true. It is also true, quite possibly, that parents don't want to understand: they would rather believe.[11]

Central to schools' and parents' mutual need to maintain strictly regulated relations is their mutual goal of preserving shared norms. That is, both schools and parents believe in the mission of schools to preserve the best of American culture. They both believe in the axial importance of equity. Whenever differences of interpretation between professionals and parents might threaten this crucial agreement, the principal, as manager of the school's public image, must act to prevent direct comparisons. The principal is expected by teachers and by the Administration to arrange matters so that, ideally, it never occurs to parents to question specifics of curriculum or of school routines.[12]

## PRINCIPALS BUFFER AND BALANCE

Although as we have seen much of the principal's work consists of meeting the harmonious demands of teachers and Administration, in the few instances where open differences between the two arise, the principal, who links the bureaucratic and teaching systems, must intercede. Most often the activating issue is bureaucratic versus teacher interpretation of equity. Teachers feel the special needs of individual children and naturally respond by seeking special help. Where need can be unambiguously demonstrated as, for instance, through the ARD process described in Chapter III, help is available. The principal's task when a teacher requests Plan A help for one of her students is to mediate the demands of teachers, who want help, parents, who may fear stigma if help is sought, and Administration, who must allocate scarce Plan A resources according to their situational view of equity, i.e., sameness unless overridden by legally defensible exigencies.

Special need is not exceptional but endemic in certain schools, for instance, Adobe, where standard resources are never enough to do the job teachers think should be done. Here the principal must continually intercede between the needs of the teaching/learning process and the requirements of bureaucrats. So far patient reiteration of the school's special needs up the hierarchy has not brought acceptance of a policy of weighting pupil loads according to the difficulty of teaching, the reform Adobe teachers would value most. On the other hand, there have been some victories, as when the administration responded to an exposition of need for an associate teacher with authorization of a regular full time teacher, bringing class loads down by one fourth in 6th grade. Even when results are slow, the effort pays off in staff morale. When teachers praise principals, they say over and over: "He or she understands our situation. The principal goes to bat for us." That is, teacher expect principals to represent them and share their perspective about what should be done;

likewise, principals, as we pointed out earlier are similarly expected to share the administration view, juggling in between parental and community expectations.

Ironically, the one issue that would seem most likely to require principals' constant vigilance, mediating bureaucratic requirements for supervision of teachers and teacher's insistence on professional latitude, principals simply finesse. They are content with a look and a promise. The reasons for this are discussed at length in the following chapter. Here we need only note two relevant conditions. The first condition that militates against principals' acting as bureaucratic supervisors is their own participation in the teaching/learning system of norms, values, operative recipes. Principals see themselves as senior colleagues.

The second condition is that the organizational structure in which principals work effectively insures that principals will spend most of their time on administration, maintaining order in the school, and keeping parents happy - all the work, in other words, that we have described in this chapter. Lacking manpower and incentives to enforce compliance, the Administration doesn't press for inspection of classrooms. Teachers, protected by traditional prerogative (backed, sometimes, by walls and doors, though these are not necessary), can resist inspection. Surprisingly, perhaps, when substantive inspection does occur in a teacher's classroom, other teachers, more often than Administration or parents, are the instigators. Thus teachers can limit and use inspection rather than submit to it as the principal's bureaucratic subordinates. Principals, for their part, lack training for the role of inspector, have few incentives with which to motivate top flight teacher performance, and must cultivate collegial relationships with teachers in order to operate their schools smoothly. In any case, superficial oversight serves to eliminate the truly incompetent, and that, at bottom, is what the system demands of principals as supervisors.

## CONCLUDING COMMENT

The varying views of principal's work point to the ongoing structural features that shape their involvement in school life. Central administration requires that they formulate responses to pressures created by funding agencies, federal agencies, parents, and other external groups. In addition, the central administration expects principals to perform the routine bureaucratic chores that must be done to keep the administrative structure functioning and, in addition, the school operating. Since these expectations result in documentation that is turned in to "Downtown" principals must attend to it; stated in another way, there is a great deal to lose by not doing it and much to be gained by doing it. Moreover, there isn't anyone else in the school who can do it; such activities are considered legitimate ones for principals by the administration and by the teachers.

Both teachers and central administration expect principals to manage parental involvement in the schools so as to maintain good relations while simultaneously limiting influence. Being successful at such tasks requires hours of planning, meeting attendance and patient conferences.

Teachers expect backing on discipline and help with an occasional unruly parent. All of these features lead to a heavy involvement of principals in administration and interpersonal relations involving formal appearances and a relative lack of involvement in classroom inspection. Yet, as we note in the following chapter, there are still other forces that lead to the lack of inspection of teacher work.

# CHAPTER IV

## Footnotes

1. In a sense, principals represent the generalized other, or larger community and its consensus about values. The united front that teachers and principals can put forward becomes a collective moral force that can carry great weight for young children (see Mead, 1934).

2. See Gracey, 1972.

3. Bidwell, 1965: 994-5.

4. According to a 1978 research study the National Association of Elementary School Principals, less than twenty per cent (19.5%) of the 1,668 principals reporting had assistants.

5. For a similar view of principals work, see Crowson and Porter-Gehrie, 1979.

6. On every entry door to the schools, signs direct visitors to come to the Principals office and register. While there may be many reasons for this, one which is quite important stems directly from the legal liability of the district for the welfare of the children. This becomes of special concerns when one parent (of a divorced couple) comes to remove the child form school during the day.

7. Of course, one of the major problems for individual schools is their communications system. Isolated from parents and the district, the average elementary has one or two telephone lines and, perhaps, three or four instruments. When more than one or two people call the schools, it becomes impossible for communication to occur. In crisis situations, principals are likely, in fact, to be without direction from above, and unlikely to get it (district telephones are also tied up by outsiders calling).

8. It is important to distinguish between the social authority represented by principals on the one hand and policemen on the other. One sixth grader called to account for the same prank to both principal and police recounted that when he faced the principal it was hard to hear because his "ears felt wet." Facing the policeman, he couldn't talk because his "spit was all gone." The authority of schools is presumed to be benevolent. Having transgressed their standards, one feels shame. Cold fear is a more likely response to police interrogation.

9. One of the little noted tasks of schools is distribution of written messages. No quantitative study is known to us, but it seems likely that American public schools, with their millions of tiny message carriers, rival the U.S. Postal Service in volume delivered.

10. For a detailed discussion of staging performances for audiences and aspects of the social control of impressions see Goffman, 1959.

11. A logic of confidence is simply less costly fiscally, temporally, and socially than its alternatives. This is true not only for the school, as we discuss in the next chapter, but also for the parents. Parent-run free schools fail in part because they demanded more time than parents could feasibly give.

12. To involve parents in curriculum decisions would very likely bring to the surface devisive issues, the outcroppings of which are faintly visible even now. Such issues would include differences over emphasis on fundamentals at the expense of enrichment (or vice versa) or giving special attention to the gifted or physically handicapped. The most gingerly skirted of all issues in Prairie Heights today is the teaching of "values." To speak openly of values presumably would threaten cultural consensus. But all these snares can be and are avoided by the device of insisting on professional control of curriculum. As we have seen (in Chapter III), operative contorl of curriuclum rests at the state level, where professionals are, in fact, subjected to considerable commercial and political pressure. For PHISD, though, the appearance of professional control is preserved by lengthy review processes. A parent or citizen who objects to certain classroom material must file a detailed explanation of his objection, which will be reviewed by committees of teachers, district staff and parents, and ultimately by the Superintendent. In practice the Superintendent's recommenation to act on or disregard the complaint is likely to be decisive with the Board.

Similarly, if the norm of equity is to rest unchallenged, parents must believe that all teachers and all PHISD elementary schools offer children an essentially equal opportunity. Quantitative equality based on state formulas can be demonstrated, but schools must make strenuous efforts to avoid qualitative comparison. In PHISD the cornerstone of this effort is the self-contained classroom, buttressed by the understanding that parents (along with other teachers, pupils, district personnel, and even principals) enter only rarely, with specific cause, and with permission. We see the force of this policy most obviously where physical walls do not exist, as at Duncan School. Here (as will be discussed later), principal and teachers join forces in amighty effort to insure that every classroom on a grade level will be perceived as offering identical facilities, programs, and even identical wall posters. Leading the school forces wherever these school prerogatives are challenged is the principal.

# CHAPTER V

## EVERYBODY KNOWS YOU DON'T JUST GO IN THERE: WHY CLASSROOMS ARE SUPERFICIALLY INSPECTED

> Organizational control structure is a distribution of means used by an organization to elicit performances it needs and to check whether the quantities and qualities of such performances are in accord with organizational specifications (Amitai Etzioni).[1]

As Etzioni points out in the quote above, the social control of work involves more than inspection, it involves a distribution of means,---resources and recipes---that ideally result in a quantity of similar performances of some minimum quality that meet organizational specifications. Where organizational specifications are global, a considerable range of behavior may fall within them (i.e., be seen by participants as legitimate). Where the distribution of means (resources and recipes) are virtually given (as in schools), then a more scripted, less improvised, performance should result. However, where the products being produced are people (who simultaneously are being taught a culture, but also sorted out for places within it), total routinization of the script is impossible. In schools people are at once the indispensible *sine qua non* foundation on which, and for which, the organization is built - and the most malleable elements in the organization.[2] Where the people are, then, in the classroom, the press from above for routinization encounters the necessity for improvisation. Improvisation is necessary because of teachers' quest for discretion within the established order; they are the teachers, they know what is best. Children, on the other hand, quest for expression within the established order and for chances to set their own learning agenda. Yet the range of improvisations is limited by the provisions available; that is, teachers can only use recipes for which ingredients are on hand.

In the classroom, situations are both routinized and improvised; here teachers impart the cultural recipes and decide which children follow the recipes best. Teachers orchestrate from district provided scores, using sets of socially shared, legitimated recipes aimed at getting the job done as the job is seen by those doing it--teachers. Teachers do so within a confined resource base, within a bureaucratic structure, but with idealized notions of teaching which they daily reconcile through their work (i.e., they make-do within the structure and compromise idealized versions of their work). The limitations imposed on teacher work by themselves and on teacher discretion by the organization are sufficient to make close inspection of work unnecessary. It may, we argue, actually be a threat to the organization of education as it now operates.

Outsiders might think that principals are not doing "their job" if it is true that classroom activities are only superficially inspected. This is a narrow view of work within an organizational context, of the stresses and contingencies built into networks of social relationships and cultural affiliations. When, collectively and positionally, classroom supervision does not seem to get done or is accomplished in a superficial manner, explanations based on individual aberration are of little value, for if many different individuals are acting in similar ways, they must be acting within a similar social context, formulating responses to similar pressures, and perhaps even sharing solutions. Simply put, there are profound organizational and institutional reasons for the relative non-inspection of teacher work in the classroom, and it is our purpose here to examine them. In this chapter we will consider these reasons from four standpoints: 1) the situational imperatives directing principals' activity away from supervision, 2) the physical and organizational boundaries that impede inspection of classrooms, 3) the potentially prohibitive costs of thoroughgoing inspection, and 4) the possibility that, carried to an extreme, inspection could only preserve the organization (schooling) at the expense and continued erosion of education (teaching/learning process).

## SITUATIONAL IMPERATIVES THAT CHANNEL PRINCIPALS' ATTENTION AND ACTIVITY

### Instructional Leadership

Administrators and principals agree that principals should act as instructional leaders; however, as we have noted previously, shared belief by no means ensures common actions, for actors behave situationally. Administrators, for example, define instructional leadership as relaying instructional directives from the top to the classroom. As one principal expressed her understanding of the matter,

> The Superintendent gets all the Principals together and says, "you know, we are going to teach 'this' and we are going to teach 'that'." And, the Principals are charged with the responsibility of going back to their building and becoming instructional leaders. That's the way they're supposed to handle it. The principals are instructional leaders of the building.

It is fairly clear in this passage, particularly when we remember that, within limits given by the state, the district also controls choice of texts and instruction time allotments, that what the Superintendent means by leadership is, in fact, control over the recipes for action. The principal is to act for the district, to supplement the indirect organizational control of teacher work embodied in texts and time designations by exercising his or her personal authority to establish effective limitations on instruction. PHIDS Administration has attempted to enforce this view by instructing principals to collect lesson plans from every teacher on a systematic and regular basis. Furthermore, they wanted principals to use these plans as a way to monitor teacher performance: they were to compare what the teachers said they were doing with what they were actually doing during the day. From the Administration's standpoint, this was what being an "instructional leader" meant in terms of monitoring teacher performance. A principal describing her own ideal of instructional leadership elicits a different interpretation:

> I'm very disappointed in my ability to get into the classrooms to really change and direct curriculum...I never have time to think and develop programs.

Simply put, principals do not define the supervision task as checking to see whether teachers are complying with the Superintendent's, the district's, or the state's directives; they see their role as fostering the professional growth of their teachers. They do not view themselves, literally, as superintendents--those who oversee and direct work--but as first among colleagues, that is, principals. We believe that principals share with teachers a view of principal's work that emphasizes their problem solving, colleagial role. This view was expressed to us by both teachers and principals in Prairie Heights and is compatible with a version of "supervision" widely accepted in academic education theory, a version represented for example, by Neagley and Evans:

> An important tenet of supervision long has been that the best supervision makes the supervised increasingly more independent.[3]

The first reason principals slight inspection, then, is that their interpretation of instructional leadership is at variance with the bureaucratic one. In their idealized version, being an instructional leader is a fulltime job--developing programs, changing curriculum, fostering professional growth, knowing what is taught in all grades, K-6, and being an inspiration to teachers. This is also a formidable task so defined, but at least consonant with a professional, and not bureaucractic, image. However, there are not many recipes available for doing the professional task. Furthermore, even if principals wished to act as supervisors, there are built in impediments to supervision throughout the school system, beginning with Central Administration. While expecting principals to supervise teaching, Administration insists that principals do administrative work first. As was noted in the previous chapter, Administration demands proof of action on administrative chores such as accounting for enrollment. No such tangible follow-through is expected from principals' instructional leadership.

Likewise, teachers expect principals to do the administration, operate the school, help solve their problems, and expect not to be inspected.[4] What then, could be more natural than the outcome we observe: the busy principal makes *pro forma* evaluation visits, keeps himself on view to the greatest extent possible in the public areas of the school, and carries on his urgent business, administration. Thus, the first reason classroom work is but superficially inspected stems from the combined weight of variances in interpretation of role, lack of available means--resources and recipes--for realization, and the lack of attachment and support for principal enactment of instructional leadership by both administration and teachers. We have labeled this reason "the necessary ambiguity of instructional leadership." Three more reasons reinforce its effect by increasing the likelihood principals will inspect classrooms only superficially. The three additional reasons are the unintended effects of consultants, the incentive structure, and principals' career lines.

## The Unintended Effects of Consultants

Sharing some aspects of the instructional leadership role with PHISD principals is a group of curriculum and methods specialists, called Consultants, who, like principals, report to Area Directors. In elementary schools, consultants work by grade level, one for each grade. Consultants play a variety of roles, but two concern us here: they are the primary source for instructional help for teachers, and they transfer information from teachers to Area Directors. This latter activity, sometimes latent, becomes manifest generally when there are complaints across schools about materials:

> Yes, and it's a very needed source; the teachers need to feel that somebody up there is hearing me. I'm concerned about this and the Consultant is the one who can say "the teachers in my area have these feelings about the new adopted handwriting book. They're worried that the parents are going to be very critical and wondering if maybe we need to schedule an orientation just for parents." Oh, well we hadn't thought about that. Yes, that's a very important function.

While consultants, technically, have no line authority, their recommendations appear to carry weight derived from their status as consultants, as specialists. They extend coordination and information gathering beyond the traditional authority structure (teacher to principal to central administration.) When curriculum changes are to be made (as in the case of one of our study schools, Adobe), Consultants assigned to the school assess the situation. The procedure is for the Consultant to observe certain classes where the proposed changes apply and then report back to the principal (and to the Area Director) recommendations. In major curriculum changes the principal cannot make the decision without concurrence of the Consultant. Thus, not only are there information channels that loop curriculum and instructional information around the principal, but in addition, Consultants, as specialists, can on occasion alter local school plans, but they do so rarely.

Secondly, Consultants are the primary source for instructional assistance for teachers, especially new teachers:

> Researcher: Could you maybe expand on that a little bit, first on the Consultants, what specifically can they do, do they do, do you want them to do?
>
> Teacher: First of all, when you first come into the district, in particular, they spend a lot time with you. It's not like they are watching over you or anything, but they are there if you need them. They will help you organize the class, talk with you about grouping, for example, let you set up observations if you want to see how something is done in another school. They will let you go to other schools and arrange that for you, sometimes taking your class while you are away observing. I have had in the past, had Consultants come into my room to work with me on units: a newspaper unit one time, teaching children how to write research another time. And, Consultants do extra curricular things--organizing workshops and teaching us how to do different methods, or bringing speakers to us, or just getting together to share ideas with the teachers.

Consultants know about where to get materials for teachers and can aid in instruction if necessary. This type of assistance and provision of information that teachers would be unable to get from principals is seen as a valuable function, but combined with the role above, both erode the instructional leadership and supervision capacities of principals. While principals have the authority to supervise teachers, the lack of specialist knowledge, plus the lack of rationales for supervision--"everybody knows you don't just go in there"--make inspection more difficult for principals. Furthermore, the operative rule--that one does not enter a teacher's classroom without some "excuse"--applies to Consultants. They make periodic visits, not to supervise teachers, nor inspect their work, but to "ask if you have any concerns or feelings about any particular subject that you are working in." Only when teachers want to see the Consultant or have observations done by them does this occur. The end result is to create a situation where the principal's authority as the instructional leader is eroded and to deny the principal at least partially any rationale (other than naked inspection of work) for entering the class.[5]

## The Incentive Structure

If principals had incentives to offer for superior performance--and if they could define superior performance--they would have reason to get into classrooms and observe it. For reasons to be discussed later in this chapter, output measures such as student achievement scores are not considered acceptable bases for judging teacher performance, and no other standard is available to principals or others. Very briefly, this is the problem: though teachers can be held responsible for controlling student behavior, and failure to control the classroom is sufficient grounds for judging a teacher's performance unsatisfactory, no such simple criterion exists for good performance. Good performance would presumably go beyond control to encouraging learning. But responsibility for the teaching/learning process is shared by teachers and students, and in practice it becomes impossible to assess accurately and fairly their relative contributions to the outcome. Admitting that theoretically, at least, one might measure teachers' relative success in motivating relatively successful learning, what incentives might principals use to motivate teachers? As schools are now organized, there are no such incentives. If as Lortie says, paraphrasing Parsons, the major function of managerial personnel is to allocate resources within the organization, then the principal can hardly be considered a manager at all.[6] The principal has no control of the resources teachers need to work with. Functionally classrooms are quite similar. Texts are assigned. Equipment, from overhead projectors to chalk, is distributed by the numbers. The quality of students, considered by teachers to be the single greatest determinant of their success in the classroom, is controlled by forces above and below the principal's formal power to assign pupils. (These forces are examined in the following chapter.) Even the minor perquisites managers in almost any other comparable white collar organization can provide - a choice parking spot, employee chosen vacation time, approval of travel for conferences - these are denied principals.

Worse, principals have no power to negotiate salary, and even their right to hire and fire is hedged by tenure rules. Principals normally inherit a staff, many of whom are already tenured -- not only formally, in the district, but informally, in the building, according to seniority. According to an unwritten PHISD policy, it may be impossible to transfer out staff who are in effect "tenured in place." Teachers who have seniority are in effect an unintended sidebet whose presence modifies lines of action by principals, and this "last-in-first-out" policy perpetuates a system that reduces the principal's power over teacher placement and turnover in the more desirable teaching locations.[7] It appears that in practice, and presumably lack of inspection by principals contributes to this result, teacher's attainment of tenure is only indirectly and loosely linked to job performance.[8] One teacher thus described the connection:

> **Teacher:** But once you are in and once you attain tenure, you are very safe. You might be bumped from a building, but they almost have to assure you, if you have tenure, that they are going to put you someplace else.
>
> **Researcher:** Is it very difficult to get tenure?
>
> **Teacher:** Three years.

Describing the process of being evaluated for tenure, a new teacher concurs in this estimate: relative to what one might expect, the process of examination for tenure lacks rigor.

> **Researcher:** Is it a written form that she fills out, a form that you fill out, is it talking or what?
>
> **Teacher:** We have a printed form. There are blank spaces on it where we write our own goals, you know, that's not printed. Of course, she approves all of them, or I suppose she approves in all cases, she approved mine so that's fine.
>
> **Researcher:** So it was through a fairly loose type of...
>
> **Teacher:** Oh yes, it was very informal. Of course, I felt very much at ease...she's that type of person. She just makes you at ease, interested in what you are doing.

Thus principals are hindered by an incentive system that lacks rewards for good performance and sanctions for poor performance, unless incompetence is glaringly apparent.

## Principals' Career Lines: Down from the High School, Up from the Classroom

Even today, in Prairie Heights, the prevailing pattern for elementary school principal recruitment is to promote male secondary school teachers who have little knowledge of elementary education. That is, they lack understanding of the direction, ideology, organization of instruction, and curriculum of elementary schools, which differ from those of secondary schools, as do the methods of managing pupils, with which principals are most directly concerned. Administrators lacking elementary school know-how are at a disadvantage and quite limited in the type of leadership they can provide and control they can assert. As one principal notes:

> The reality of the situation is that up until recent years, and I am still speaking of Prairie Heights, because my last 11 years have been here, in the past many of the principals were secondary-oriented people. They were secondary teachers and they were promoted to Elementary Principal. I am not saying that this is right or wrong. I just don't happen to think that it is a good administrative policy, but I know why it occurred. All for economic reasons, masculine ego, all of those things. Things that you can't change. So it is very difficult for a man who has been a Coach or a Science teacher or an Ag teacher, and my principal happened to be a vocational Ag teacher....It was very difficult for him to become a instructional leader, because I knew a whole lot more about elementary education than he did. So, one of the things that can happen is, that if you have a principal who is not knowledgeable in instruction, you make yourself very vocal, you can resist openly and become ugly about it. Some people did, and there were some principals who would keep peace at any price with that "old bittie" down the hall. So they chose to ignore what she was doing, or the smoother operators would take the principal into their confidence and say "let me teach you, let me teach you, let me show you," and you would pass your biases on to them.

If career lines were the only obstacle to instructional leadership, there would be a simple solution. One could effect greater inspection by changing those career lines. In fact, this has been tried. A PHISD policy change in 1975 resulted in the appointment of several female principals, all experienced elementary teachers, all clearly knowledgeable about elementary curriculum and methods. But while these principals have been determined to fulfill aspects of the instructional leader role, their efforts do not appear to have changed the prevailing practice of relatively superficial inspection. As one teacher describes the current point of view:

> Aside from the yearly evaluation, there's very little communication there--which is great. What's there to talk about anyway, if you're doing an OK job in the classroom?

That principals equipped to provide instructional leadership and convinced of the importance of doing so are unable to bring about major changes demonstrates that the reasons for failure are not personal, not in the role alone, but are systemic, intertwined, and complex. Principals' career lines are one factor inhibiting inspection, but changing those career lines is not sufficient to bring about inspection.

The situational inperatives that principals face with regard to their work are part of a conventional system of doing things understood and largely taken for granted by teachers and principals. The routine ways are built up through situational adjustments made collectively by participants.[9] As the situations and their pressures recur, commitment is made to one aspect or another, but it is a commitment by default. Commitments of this nature are no less constraining than those voluntarily entered into. In examining the pressures on principals to not-inspect (both in the bureaucratic and colleagial senses), we noted pressures to keep busy with administrative work, lack of incentives for performance monitoring, the role of Consultants as alternative instructional leaders, and principals' career lines. More simply stated, principals are not in classrooms directing curriculum because they see themselves as "not having any time." On their part, this is a situational adjustment that as a group, they have become committed to with active help of their peers and larger organization. They don't have time because they are under pressure from above and below to handle administrative chores. No less important, principals have relatively full control of these tasks. They are given the resources and recipes for administrative work, but not for inspecting instruction. Finally, their administrative role is not shared with other officials, whereas the instructional leadership role is. The principal is fully responsible for activities in his school. He has the means to insure that all work there undertaken is completed according to organizational specifications--except work done by teachers within the classroom walls.

## SELF-CONTAINMENT: RECIPES FOR ELUDING JUDGEMENT

### The Appearance of Satisfactory Progress

PHISD teachers are not evaluated. Rather, their performances are checked against a list of minimum requirements and judged satisfactory unless obviously failing. The requirements for satisfactory rating include passing marks in 4 categories of teacher behavior and 1 of pupil behavior, not, significantly, pupils' academic achievement. Fifty variables make up the 4 categories of teacher behavior; for example, "Teaching Techniques," one of the teacher behavior categories, includes

> ...teaching objectives and methodology, explanations, presentation of problems, planning, preparation and adjustments, use of materials and approaches, attention to needs of pupils, motivation and guidance of pupils, classroom management, evaluation and testing, maintenance of records, classroom organization, work with individual and group responsibilities, skills in questioning, making assignments, drill, homework, using "Directed Study Method" in teaching, standing, circulating around room, so help can be given to those who need help...
>
> --PHISD Evaluation of Competencies in Job Performance, n.d.

No weights are assigned to these various components; it is left to the principals to define each component, judge their relative importance, and on this basis assign an overall performance score of satisfactory or not. Like the Progress Reports given pupils, these report forms allow principals to specify areas in which performance improvement is needed, but they do not allow for recognition of individual achievement. Such recognition, if given, must ge provided in non-routine ways. The ordinary recipe for teacher rating implies that distinction is not expected.

It might be argued, more positively, that the teacher rating process is not codified because teaching is not just a bureaucratic function; it is also a profession and a craft. Metaphorically, though the state provides the staples on the shelf and some of the cookbooks, though the district supplies the place to cook and specific recipes, teachers insist that cooking is an art. Neither the state nor the district has indicated interest in knowing how the baking is done nor in tasting the cake, for tasting would involve them collectively in responsibility for the product. On the other hand, they want to know how many cakes were baked and how that total ranked among comparable kitchens.

As long as the child's achievement meets the expectations of the parent(s), no explanations need to be given, nor justifications made. When one child deviates, responsibility is frequently laid upon the child. It is only when (and sometimes not even then) children deviate collectively in achievement, that teacher work may come to the forefront, that performances are called into question. Individual schools that develop patterns of achievement for the children must take pains to have the patterns duplicated, more or less. If the pattern is to change, it must do so upwardly, or gradually, so as not to precipitate a problematic situation that would call performances into question. As long as problems do not arise, then collectively the performances of teachers do not matter very much.

The public trust is maintained; the bureaucratic administrative machinery is maintained; and teachers' core conceptions of themselves as professionals (who should by right have discretion) are maintained.

One direct sign that in normal circumstances teacher work is not called into question is the funding formula based on Average Daily Attendance, not Average Daily Achievement. Formula lock in resource parameters, and schools are assured of resources provided they meet minimum standards, defined as pupils on board for the legally required minimum hours and days. Legally, allocations cannot be withheld for poor performance nor augmented for outstanding achievement. In this way, school systems are partially protected from outside inspection of performance. This relationship, of course, holds for allocations at every level. Individual schools and classrooms are legally protected from scrutiny by the fact that their resources come by right, not by achievement. Good faith, in the case of schools, is demonstrated by proper staff credentials, distribution of approved curriculum materials, and adherence to prescribed standards of accounting for budget and personnel. As we have noted, in Prairie Heights, as perhaps in other districts, there exist bureaucratic structures to control money and materials. Officials are concerned about and account for student enrollment (as a basis for allocations of workforce, materials, etc.) and the movement of materials such as textbooks.[10]

The school accepts responsibility, too, for student behavior, and unacceptable behavior that is widespread will lead to reprimand or worse for the teachers concerned. It is assumed that student behavior, aside from learning, is controlled by teacher's classroom management, not by students. Therefore, the variability expected in academic performance is neither planned for nor tolerated where student conduct is concerned. In contrast, performance in the sense of success in imparting the standard curriculum to students is not the school's responsibility. Assuming the teacher's classroom behavior standards have been within the acceptable range, learning is supposed to be the student's responsibility.[11]

### The Insulated Classroom in the Self-Contained School

The pattern of isolation set by the separation of school systems from the adult world is reinforced by patterns of organization within the system. That is, each elementary school within PHISD operates independently of all others. They do not compete for students. With the exception of band directors and sometimes counselors, they do not share staff. Consultants, the only professional group authorized to move among classrooms at various schools, have no authority over teachers. Performance of one school does not affect performance at any other school and need not concern any other.

The isolation of schools and teachers is deepened by lack of equipment. Elementary schools lack the basic office equipment for communication and record keeping that any small business would consider indispensable. Two outside telephone lines, with phones in the principal's office, the cafeteria, secretary's and counselor's offices, link the 500 people who work in a typical school to the administration building and the rest of the city. These lines are often tied up for an hour running. During a tornado warning in 1979, it was impossible for Central Administration and parents to reach the schools. On ordinary business, parents who wish to talk with teachers must ask the school secretary to put a little note in the teacher's mailbox, which she will check once, possibly twice, each day. Teachers who wish talk with parents, or arrange field trips, or order materials from central supplies line up outside the counselor's office to take turns using his phone. Nor is record keeping easier than communication. Teachers have no typewriters or clerical help. Schools do not have photographic copiers. The sole written record of a teacher's day is a lesson plan, one fifth of an 8 1/2 x 11 page, and a stack of student work, which only the teacher will see.

Lacking basic tools, teachers can not easily collaborate with parents on individualized learning programs; in fact, they cannot even coordinate with parents to ensure maximum benefits from homework. Similarly, they can not keep central authorities current on pupil progress. Of course, teachers are not called upon to do either of these things: their isolation is taken for granted. Curriculum is not designed for the individual student so much as for the gross cultural production of standardized knowledge. Central administration, though concerned indirectly with the standardized curriculum, has no official responsibility for student achievement. In such circumstances, schools are set up not to accomodate communication but, on the contrary, to require the least possible coordination among workers.[12]

In PHISD the isolation of schools is symbolized by and realized in the self-contained neighborhood school, buffered from the adult world (the competitive, commerical, productive, essentially male world) by its acres of playground and tracts of residential development. For parents, the neighborhood school gives reassurance that property values, and by extension, social values, will remain as they are. For bureaucrats, the arrangement maintains belief in the essential sameness of schools. They all look alike, and since comparison is difficult, may be presumed to perform alike. If results are seen to differ, then the explanation must be differences in neighborhood.[13] The differences may be attributed to characteristics of parents or of students, or more likely, both.[14] Because neighborhood differences exist, it becomes difficult to measure teachers' performances on the basis of student achievement, i.e., to inspect teaching by measuring learning. Further, responding to perceived differences, schools become different: they develop recipes that are situationally applicable, that work for them. As, on the one hand, neighborhood schools contain differences and make improvisation feasible, on the other, they provide the means to support an official ideal of interchangeability of schools. The Administration can merely allow differences to happen, as it were, without making a public issue of the matter. Attempts to standardize performance, in such circumstances, would jeopardize the ideal without providing any real possibility that standardization could be achieved.

Classrooms are the inner sanctums within the school within the organization that is representative of the institution that closes children off from some aspects of the world and exposes them to others. The self-contained classroom is insulated to some extent from outside influence. The walls are both concrete and symbolic--they define a "traditional" teaching/learning situation and aid in its perservation. The classroom symbolizes and makes real the teacher's domain. No one walks in without the teacher's nod of permission; similarly, no one dictates procedures for instruction, choice of recipes. As we have seen, however, these are delimited by other means. Symbolically, too, classroom walls provide the space within which the personal bond between teacher and learner can flourish, the bond on which the teacher's idealized conception of teaching depends and which parents count on, especially in the early years. Within the limited space defined by classroom walls, the cultural lesson of self-containment is passed on: pupils learn to set limits about themselves which repeat the culturally approved, classroom symbolized pattern of self-control within social bounds. And practically, for teachers and principals, classroom walls facilitate discipline. What would be a continual process of rule definition, challenge, enforcement, redefinition if walls did not exist becomes, with walls, a simple matter. Walls focus responsibility. Teachers will manage these pupils according to that recipe (which they, at their discretion, may modify but not reject).

District recognition of the usefulness of walls is demonstrated by what PHISD informants have spoken of as "The Year of the Wall." At that time, early in the 1970s, schools built according to the 1960s vogue with double, triple, and quadruple class spaces acquired walls--not high cost heavy sliding walls or old fashioned solidly built floor-to-ceiling enclosures, but partial walls that block sightlines only, not sound.[15] A small group of parents initiated the change, objecting, we were told, to the possible open-education implications of open spaces. The Superintendent passed the order to enclose. Teachers have since supplemented district efforts at enclosure by enthusiastically supplying screens, both physical and social. Children as young as kindergartners participate in the wall building, developing a loyalty to their own group and teacher that precludes interaction across invisible barriers as effectively as if they were concrete.

## The High Cost of Performance Evaluation

As we have noted, individual schools (and their teachers) resist comparisons and thus provide parents with little relevant information on which to base decisions. As a consequence, when their children's progress lags, parents often find fault with themselves and their children rather than with the schools.[16] While this is generally accurate for Prairie Heights schools, one, the magnet school, is open to scrutiny by the federal court and open to comparison to neighborhood schools from which volunteer students are recruited. In this section, we examine the increased supervision and inspection of work that results, which is nominal at best, and indicate the high costs of such an increase for the district.

We noted previously that Carmine, the magnet school, has an elaborated administrative structure that is coupled to its attempts to check on performance more thoroughly than at other PHISD schools. For example, in 1978-79 and again in 1979-80, Carmine pretested and posttested all pupils for IQ and achievement using the McGraw Hill CAT test. Introduced with the test in 1978 was a program of goal and objective definition for the school. Together, testing and goal setting were used to develop new plans for making instruction more effective. The capability for more inspection of classrooms was provided by the 1979 reorganization of the administrative structure that includes an Executive Director and three Assistant Principals. The new Executive Director became co-equal with four previously existing Area Executive Directors who generally supervise eight elementary schools. In effect, the magnet school became an area, thus demonstrating the concern of the district for the school. One Assistant Principal is in charge of operations and the extended day program. Each of the others is responsible for three grades and has administrative, supervisory and consulting duties.[17] As a result, these Assistant Principals are able to be in the classrooms more often, offering instructional advice and supervising work (which they de-emphasize) as one notes:

> I see my role as instructional but not classroom management of structure. It would be to bring in new programs, to stimulate toward using new techniques, to facilitate more than to go in and restructure...

(But her position as supervisor also allows her, if she wishes, to restructure as an authority rather than as a consultant offering suggestions.)

> But then again, I wouldn't be hesitant to do so if a need arose.

In contrast to previous practice, Carmine's assistant principals enter classrooms and even the Area Director is accessible, as a teacher who taught through both administrations notes:

> Oh yeah, things have changed 2000 per cent. The Executive Director has been to some of our grade level meetings. He is very visible; he's around all of the time. He and the Assistant Principals say, "Come to my office any time." If we have a discipline problem or a problem with a parent or anything, we go to their offices and they are there and it's great.

The Executive Director is available, but not intrusive. His is the traditional principal's role. He does not inspect classrooms. He does, however, act to buffer the school against the full onslaught of interference that could result from Carmine's uniquely exposed position:

> Teacher: He has lightened our responsibilities as far as parents are concerned. Used to, it would take one parent to change any policy at this school last year. And now, whether it was a right change or a wrong change, parents were just the ones that decided what would happen every day, and now the Executive Director says the principals and the teachers run the school. And that we want to work with the parents but we are the ones that will run the school and make the decisions, and that makes it easier on us. I think it is easier teaching here this year. Because I know that I have principals that are backing me up in things that I do.

The special circumstances at Carmine contribute in still another way to principals' involvement in instruction. Carmine teachers, unlike those at other PHISD elementaries, are assisted by a corps of aides and special teachers. Every grade level has two teaching assistants and a resource teacher, so that the ratio of adults to pupils is 8 to 100 rather than 3 or 4 to 100 as at other schools. The regular teachers are able to assign the assistants to paperwork or classroom work according to need, but principals feel responsible for insuring that assistants' time is well used.

Thus, Carmine, given special resources to accomplish its mission, can use these same resources to deal with its special vulnerability to outside scrutiny. With the extra capability of a uniquely highly ranked principal and two assistant principals, the school administration responds in opposite, yet complementary, ways. First, it increases its ability to account to the public for performance by stepping up supervision of classrooms by professionals. Secondly, it shores up its defenses against what the staff considers unwarranted non-professional interference in its procedures. In these respects, Carmine illustrates what might happen if all schools were subjected to performance evaluation even to the small extent Carmine is:

> 1) Specific performance goals and objectives are specified for the school as a whole and for each grade level.
> 2) The school attempts to link student test results (achievement) to the goals and objectives.
> 3) The school adds to both supervisory staff and teaching staff according to a pattern that calls for much greater rank differentiation than is usual in elementary schools.

The increased costs of this structure indicate one good reason why most schools have not followed this path--the conventional organization is simply cheaper to operate and satisfies the diverse demands of those who staff it.[18]

One can imagine some of the costs that would arise if close inspection of teaching performance were attempted. To begin with, there would be monetary costs for the resources for inspection and other equipment. Pressures from teachers and community would build for better teaching equipment and extended program, both of which, as they increase school resources, also increase the labor of accounting for use of resources. Once greater resources were available, individualized education would be considered, and staff added to permit small group or even one-on-one instruction. As with materials, the proliferation of staff would increase coordination needs and demands for accountability. Carried to an extreme, tighter supervision could encompass TV monitoring of classrooms, demands for written records, and even frequent classroom visits by teacher supervisors. Documentation generated by close surveillance would require clerical staff for processing, additional work and storage space, etc.

Secondly, there would be systemic implications. While one might be able to legitimate increased inspection at the one magnet school that desegregates an entire district, increased inspection at all schools would not have such a legitimizing base. Teachers would be denied the privacy of their classroom--their autonomy, which is a core value central to their conceptions of themselves as professionals. They would be resistant and alienated. In PHISD, the need for increased staff resulted in greater rank differentiation--the addition of assistant teachers who are fully credientialed, but lack experience,[19] and who are paid at a much lower rate than teachers. Given economic concerns, such a pattern could easily continue with credientialed teachers having to serve in subordinate capacities for as long as two years. In this respect the organization need not make a commitment to them, and has some new leverage for promotion. Indeed, promotion and merit pay for a good performance, defined probably by student achievement scores, would become feasible and further destroy the idea of professionals as opposed to bureaucratic functionaries. Teachers' authority to teach and sort out would be undermined (a point we return to in the next section).

Finally, there is no reason, aside from the exorbitant costs, why such capability for control should stop with teachers. School boards could demand performance accountability of Superintendents, Assistant Superintendents, Principals, Area Directors, Consultants, and all others. In the end one glimpses a nightmare scene in which the School Board pores over computer printouts and videotapes of principals watching teachers watching pupils pore over printouts and tapes, which are designed to provide feedback on their performance--a performance dictated, according to the need for comparison and accountability, by teachers, by supervisors, by superintendents, by the School Board. Practically, schooling would have been reduced to a series of technical skills performed by bureaucratic functionaries, some of whom would be called students.

Often, when the relative lack of inspection of teachers' work is discussed, implications for the system are not analyzed. Instead, the focus is on principal-teacher interactions and the collegial nature of their relationship. There is no doubt that this is an important factor, but it is tied into a larger organization that exerts pressures for other activities that take priority over inspection. Close inspection would involve the entire system in responsibility for assigning student outcomes, rather than making them the product of teacher judgement, as it is now. Though this change is not necessarily undesirable, it would involve very considerable costs. In the following section we complete our examination of inspection by focusing on the necessity for retaining craft and professional elements in the teacher role. We argue that public belief in the certifying functions of schools requires teachers, who perform the certification, to act as craftsmen and to be perceived as professionals. Close inspection would standardize craft and undermine professionalism. To subject teachers to such inspection would call into question the recipes for sorting students, and, more fundamentally the institutional basis on which the sorting is justified.

## TEACHING: PROFESSION AND CRAFT[20]

By refraining from inspection, principals reaffirm the professional authority that must be upheld so that teachers may legitimately control student behavior. The presence of any other adults in the classroom--however useful--is always threatening for this reason and is always resisted. Even more do teachers resist the presence of superiors, to whom pupils might--however remote the possibility--appeal the teacher's rulings. Within classrooms teachers must seem to be sovereign, not just because they are big, not just because they represent authority, but also because their professional knowledge is presumed to ensure that their demands are made in the children's best interest. As professionals, teachers may not rule capriciously, but only within limits defined by their professional group in shared recipes for proper classroom management. When fellow teachers perceive violations of proper procedure, professional ethics call for peer efforts at correction, and only when these fail is the principal informed.

But, as previously mentioned, there is a more important, if less urgent, need to protect teachers' authority; that is, to legitimate the schools' traditional processes for sorting pupils. Teachers' authority must be protected because they appear to decide which individuals will succeed and which will fail. At higher levels, standards seem to be set by impersonal forces--social class, technology, the labor market. These conditions greatly influence what percentage of children will fail and, in general, which children will fail. The teacher applies the general rule to individuals. *She legitimates the transfer of responsibility for success and failure from impersonal forces to individual striving or deficiencies*. The image of some bureaucratic functionary stamping "acceptable" or "inferior" on children, in a context that deeply affects their life chances, is offensive. Such judgements can be made legitimately only by competent professionals.

A second basis for teachers' freedom from inspection is that certain aspects of the teaching job call for craftsmanship, the creation of original recipes for teaching small groups and individuals.[21] In PHISD this mode of teaching is normally confined to special programs outside the regular classrooms, for example, Plan A classes described elsewhere in this report.[22] Still, because district policy requires heterogeneous grouping (See Chapter 6), every classroom teacher must develop craft skills, if only to the extent of matching students of varying reading skill with adopted and supplementary texts available. Thus the teacher's craftsmanship consists in adopting given provisions and recipes to meet the demands/needs of the basic teaching/learning process. That is, the teaching/learning process, if it is to reproduce culture effectively, must engage the student in active learning. This can be done, teachers believe, only when the personal relationship between teacher and learner is preserved. Therefore, the teacher who is successful according to teaching/learning norms (which are held, as we have seen, not only by teachers, but also by principals and administrators along with bureaucratic norms), must be capable of craftsmanship.

Very practically, though, even if teachers rejected the ideal of fostering personal responsibility for learning in their students, even if their only concern was to impart the prescribed curriculum as efficiently as possible, they would nonetheless have to develop craft skills for motivating students. For as every teacher soon learns, instruction is practically superfluous if the children are interested and impossible if they are not.

Motivating children to master the standard curriculum is a central task of teaching, as schools are now organized, and that process is not even understood theoretically, much less rationalized to a sequence of routine procedures. Nevertheless, teachers, it appears, can motivate most children most of the time to complete their work and sometimes to learn--even get excited about learning. The specific ways each teacher goes about accomplishing motivation (and control) vary with her past experience, the children's background, the social situation within the group, the materials available, subject taught, the time of day, the weather.[23] Unavoidably, operating decisions about how to motivate (control) class work are made in the classroom by the teacher. Such decisions may, at times, contradict specific time and place guidelines. Knowing which recipe to prescribe, under what circumstances, for which children, is learned on the job, from other teachers, from the children, from mistakes. It is the subject of most teachers' talk, when they talk shop. It is their craft knowledge. The above considerations have led to the development and maintenance of four operative, unwritten rules that "everybody knows" and takes for granted as a basis for action:

(1) PHISD teachers are not subject to unannounced visits by principals bent on evaluation.[24] When principals do intrude unannounced, either in person or via intercom speaker, they never discuss classroom routine. Principals try to cluster their public announcements over the intercom shortly after all pupils have arrived, and they generally confine their morning remarks to announcing school events and offering routine pleasantries, for example, "Pictures will be taken today. Miss Jones's 4th grade class had the highest participation at the Saturday bike rodeo...Congratulations. We want you all to take part in as many community activities as possible. Have a nice day." After their morning announcements, principals interrupt classroom routines only for emergencies, sudden changes in whole-school schedules, or important personal messages. It would be out of order to break in and announce that it was time for 3rd grade spelling.[25]

(2) Although decisions about academic grades and grouping based on academic performance are among the most important schools make--in their effects on individuals' life chances--teachers do not submit the names of students assigned to various groups to principals for approval, and teachers

take full responsibility for assigning grades.

(3) State law and district policy set rigid requirements for time allocations to various academic subjects; nevertheless, teachers do not clear minor departures from schedule with the office. It is assumed, though nowhere written, that teachers' management and instructional roles require some flexibility and jedgement about effective use of time.

(4) PHISD teachers must be prepared to present, on principals' request, evidence that they plan their daily lessons. It is understood, however, that the request will be made only in case a substitute teacher must fill in. This rule was tested in 1978-79 when PHISD central administration attempted to require filing of lesson plans. Their method was to issue newly designed lesson plan books, interleaved with duplicate pages; some principals collected their copies; some did not; none attempted to dictate content or to evaluate or criticize what was received. One group of teachers, when asked what they did with the extra pages their principal did not collect, replied that they used the extra space to write more detailed lesson plans than had previously been possible and/or to doodle. Examples of both uses were exhibited.

Thus, were there to be close inspection and supervision of teacher work, teacher authority in the classroom and as a certifying agent would be undermined. The latter, for the system of schooling, is more important but is hinged to the first: because teachers are alone with the children, they individually, become the only ones capable of judging and responsible, each year, individually for the judgement. Secondly, the work of teachers with malleable materials, students, requires craft work which by its very nature cannot be routinized nor standardized and as such poses extreme difficulty for evaluation.

## A CONCLUDING COMMENT ON WHAT IS INSPECTED

**Researcher:** To what degree do you think principals, like you, for example, influence the way classrooms are structured?

Principal: I think, in short principals have very little effect. When you hire that teacher, you really leave the organization of that classroom up to the teacher. Now you may if you see gross mismanagement, something like that, you may want to intervene. But teaching is a very personalized field and that personality and that structure of that teacher are going to come through in the way they get up your classroom. In Fourth Grade, I have a teacher that can individually assign to 20 students in her room; I have a teacher across the hallway...it would drive her nuts to do that. So I think you have to let your teachers have the freedom to organize their classroom to the point that is comfortable to them. The only time I would ever intervene, was that if I felt like there was not any progress in learning, there was not any kind of.. there was classroom mismanagement if I were getting a lot of parential pressure in terms of the way it was organized.. then I would intervene. We do intervene..like if I had a teacher who wanted to teach every child on the same page in mathematics all year long. I would hear from parents immediately, Then, I would have to intervene with that teacher and say "You're going to have to do some sub-grouping within mathematics, and we are going to have to individualize to meet the needs".

Correction of gross mismanagement, not ongoing supervision, is seen as the appropriate form of supervision. This view is implied by principals' practice of limiting classroom observation to pro forma visits at long intervals. While this recipe for action has many effects on the organization of schooling, two are relevant here. First, the organizational need for some commensurable measure of performance is minimally met, but the measure is too imprecise to permit informed judgement of satisfactory performance at a level that would allow merit pay decisions or provide feedback teachers need to achieve outstanding levels of performance. Secondly, and more positively, lack of ongoing inspection of behavior makes possible the effective use of craft skills and maintains professional authority to control student behavior and evaluate achievement. This keeps responsibility for outcomes individualized at the lowest level of the organization and individually determined rather than organizationally determined.

To bolster their data base for performance evaluations of teaching, principals rely on elements of behavior they can observe without being obtrusive.[26] These include measures of social behavior (good grooming, well modulated voice free of lower class speech indicators) and signs of identification with the teacher role (willingness to arrive early to work and stay late, to decorate one's room attractively, to initiate contact with parents, to serve on committees, to continue their own shcooling to and perhaps past the Master's degree).

Evidence of poor classroom control and gross mismanagement, as noted above, will result in intervention. Disorderly classes (audibly or visibly outside the room), inordinate use of one technology (e.g., whole group seatwork without provisions for differences, or "film festivals"--too frequent use of films as time fillers), or truly disastrous parental complaints will bring (often reluctantly) intervention. Besides this latter one, principals often find out about the others through peer (teacher) complaints. All in all, these measures are reflections of the hidden curriculums embedded in classroom management that must be accomplished before an "atmosphere for learning is achieved." If a teacher can apparently do this, then in effect, the job is being done. And along these lines, one must realize that test and achievement scores measure but a tiny portion of what children learn in schools that is essential to proceed as performers in an organizational society.

## FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER V

1. Etzioni, 1965:650.

2. See Barker, 1978.

3. Neagley and Evans, 1980:viii.

4. In Meyer and Rowan's (1978), terms, there is a logic of confidence, but the flow of this "logic" is not just downward from the top, but also expected by the bottom. The top presumes conformity with its wishes, but does not inspect; the bottom expects not to be inspected in conformity with their conception of themselves as professionals one should have confidence in.

5. Principals, especially those not versed in elementary education, can tacitly go along with this division of labor, and virtually never enter the classroom.

6. See Lortie, 1969.

7. See Becker, 1960 and 1952.

8. Whereas across the nation teacher associations, both national and local, provide strong lobbying efforts for their members and thus affect working conditions and salaries for teachers, they too have no power of allocation. There are at present three teacher organizations in PHISD, none affiliated with unions, none advocating collective bargaining. Teachers in the district do not appear, at this time, to be interested in either.

9. On this point, see Becker, 1964.

10. Meyer and Rowan (1978) have noted that such areas are the ones which are "tightly coupled" and for which there are accounting procedures.

11. One reason schools' teaching performance does not matter may be that there is no direct link between what students learn and how the economy performs. If student labor were needed, the public would care greatly about the quality of students' preparation, the degree to which it matched job requirements, and the amount of time it diverted from productive work. The fact that there is little effective concern about these matters tends to support the argument that schools are used largely to separate youngsters from the world of work and not to improve their performance in it.

12. As noted elsewhere, the coordination among teachers need only be lateral--at the grade level. Texts and curriculum are set for coordination. Vertical coordination need virtually not exist. This is one way, the higher authorities are de-coupled from individual student outcome.

13. In a real sense neighborhood schools create conditions of restricted entry, for to attend the school one must live in the neighborhood.

14. For a concurring view, see Lipsky, (1980) p. 53.

15. Three types of fixed partial walls are used: walls that stop short of the ceiling, walls that stop short of the sidewalls, and walls that are short in both height and breadth.

16. On this point, see Lipsky, 1980:52-53.

17. As discussed in Chapter Two, the Area Executive Director for Carmine has no staff of consultants, but instead the Assistant Principals serve in that capacity. In effect, they do what principals are supposed to be doing--acting as instructional leaders, trained in elementary education as well as administration!

18. Lipsky (1980) presents data on public service bureaucracies that affirm this point.

19. It happens in Prairie Heights that women with as much as ten years experience apply for teaching jobs and are channelled into being Assistant Teachers as a way of entre' into the PHISD full teaching ranks. We had one informant who was in her first year in PHISD an assistant teacher and in her second year promoted to not only a teacher but grade level chairperson. Ironically, she is still subject to "bumping" because those teachers nominally under her have seniority.

20. Teachers describe themselves as professionals and describe their work, in its more idealized version, as craft. Gracey in his study of Wright School captured the essentials of the idealized craft teaching:

> Those I have called "craftsman teachers" are firmly committed to an individualistic philosophy and practice of education. They believe that education ought to be tailored to individual children and carried out through individual or small group projects which reflect the learning needs and capacities of each child. For them the elementary school years ought to be seen as a whole, with children gaining knowledge and skills as they become ready for them and are stimulated by their desire to learn what they have come to need to know under the teacher's skillful guidance. The craftsman teachers therefore see teaching as a highly skilled profession involving constant creative work with individual children. (Gracey, 1972:3).

He contrasts this with "production teaching":

> I have called the other kind of classroom work found in Wright School "production teaching," and it is more usual in American elementary schools. For teachers with this orientation, teaching essentially involves taking a class of children through the prescribed year's curriculum in the prescribed amount of time. They assume that the teacher's job is to see that the children in her charge complete as much of the grade-level curriculum as possible during the school year. These teachers rely on the prescribed school system technology of textbooks, workbooks, tests, and instruction units. They work with drill and repetition rather than attempting to elicit motivation through interest in projects created for specific children in the craftsman manner. The production teachers in effect define their job as administering

> the curriculum to the children. These traditionally oriented teachers are like bureaucrats, or even production-line workers involved in processing raw materials or semi-finished products in identical ways with identical tools. The production teachers must, of course, take account of individual difference, but they certainly do not try to fashion children's education around their individuality as the craftsman teachers do. (Gracey, 1972: 3-4).

In Prairie Heights, perhaps because of the years that separate our work from his, we found no one that fit the craft model. However, we did find elements of craft work as Gracey describes it in the work of every teacher we observed. Moreover, teachers described their "production work" in terms of its craftsmanship: administering the standard curriculum but in individualized and unique ways. Teachers also express guilt at not being more "individualized" in their approach and activity. Thus, we believe teachers see themselves as craftspersons--small batch production, the development of uniquely adapted products for individual or small group consumers. This definition is also consonant with the work of Stinchcombe (1973) on skilled construction workers. Furthermore, as we note in the text of this section, when teachers talk shop to each other, they share in craft knowledge here defined as "the fruits of collective experience intelligently used and evaluated" but lacking the legitimacy of a scientific aegis. Teachers also see their craft work as being Professional. Their basis for this conception is three-fold. One is that they are "called" to be teachers; it is their vocation. Secondly, teachers assert that they have special training and knowledge about teaching and the individual learning needs of children. One should note that Etzioni (1969) in reviewing these claims labelled teaching as a semi-profession, but this debate does not concern us here, because from the eyes of teachers it is irrelevant. What is relevant is the state and status of their profession. Finally and centrally, their claim to professional status is firmly rooted in freedom from close inspection--in autonomy. And from our vantage point, it is this last one which is core, for without it, teachers would have to face evidence bearing on the second: that they administer a standard curriculum that is dictated by a process beyond their control in the fashion Gracey describes as essentially bureaucratic, production oriented. Autonomy and freedom from supervision buffers their ideology of craft and possession of special know-how from bureaucratic actions (even though as we point out, much of what is actually inspected is their bureaucratic and other "face" work).

21. See Gracey, 1972.

22. However, in special circumstances, even when extra resources were not available, we have observed craftsmanlike responses. One example comes from a First Grade. For two little Vietnamese immigrants with no English and no reading experience, special books were made by selecting pictures of objects for the children to cut out and paste on pages marked with the objects' names. The teacher, of course, prepared the children for this exercise by naming pictures of similar objects themselves whenever possible--and having the children say the words as they held the objects. Other children learned the game too and enjoyed

providing pictures for the Vietnamese or correcting their performance (which was helpful: the teacher had four regular reading groups to attend to while this was going on).

23. On this point, see Edward Hall's seminal work Beyond Culture, (1972), especially Chapter Six.

24. In some instances they have actually requested such visits, believing them less burdensome than officially scheduled observations that assume careful teacher preparation. Even though folklore among teachers and theory (Goffman, 1959) predict that pupils will join the teacher to present a creditable performance before outsiders, there are so many unpredictable elements in the teaching-learning situation that teachers believe they will be more fairly judged if principals do not assume prior preparation. Still, principals generally do not intrude uninvited. Aside from a natural wish to maintain routines of civility with staff, principals are perhaps influenced by a wish not to see a disastrous performance.

25. Technically, the intercom system is capable of monitoring all classrooms continually. The principal could listen in on teachers almost as easily as telephone company supervisors listen in on operators. The difference is not technology, but rules in context.

26. Lipsky (1980) makes a similar observation.

# CHAPTER VI

## MAKING UP GROUPS: RECIPES FOR REDUCING UNCERTAINTY AND PROMOTING EQUITY

When teachers talk about "grouping", they usually refer to the recipes by which a teacher divides a class into smaller groups according to skills or interests. By the time grouping decisions are made in the classroom, however, a series of previous recipe applications about how children are to be assigned has already determined, to a large extent, the characteristics of the children to be grouped. Children have been assigned to schools, special programs, and classrooms according to conventional and standardized rules set by state law, district policy, community custom, and teacher agreement. From a more distant perspective than that of the teacher, then, grouping can be viewed as the process of recipe application at all levels in the school system which results in the make-up of groups within classrooms.

Throughout the grouping process, as recipes are applied at district and school levels, formal and informal decision rules promote and are guided by two ends: to reduce uncertainty about student characteristics and to increase or attain equity among participants. However, depending on the level at about which recipes to apply are made, results in the classroom from application can be very different. For example, classroom organization at one of our sample schools, Carmine, departs from the norm in Prairie Heights elementary schools because prescriptive decisions that affect Carmine classrooms and no others (at least not directly) are made by the Federal District Court. Class size, class composition by race and sex, and the availability of special educational resources to permit grouping according to individual need are determined for Carmine by the Court. For other schools in the district, these matters are decided, within the bounds of state law, at the district level. At this level, as we discussed previously, a quantitative interpretation of equity prevails. Class size and availability of special education is largely determined by numbers of students, with only secondary consideration to need. But when the decisions that remain are delegated to the schools themselves, they are most often handled by small groups of teachers, specialists, and parents. Here, close tothe classroom, the tendency is to apply recipes and seek solutions everyone can agree to, and here the special needs of individual children take precedence over abstract justice.[1]

## CONSTRUCTING ATTENDANCE: NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS

In Chapter III we noted that the size of classroom groups in PHISD elementary schools (except Carmine) is essentially determined by state funding formulas. For individual schools, the total student population is virtually set by the district's commitment to neighborhood elementary schools. Under the administration of the now retired Superintendent, PHISD grew from 632 total pupils in 1952 to over 30,000 when he retired in the mid-1970's. It was "his dream to have an elementary school every square mile" in the district, and as of 1979 (when the school board stopped the acquisition of property), the 39 square mile district had 35 elementary schools. Carmine is an exception to the neighborhood school rule, as are two other schools that absorb the excess children from Carmine's neighborhood. Because the federal court order mandates 20 children per class, five white boys, five black boys, five black girls and five white girls, approximately half of Carmine's students (called volunteers) come from outside the neighborhood (which is virtually all black). Neighborhood children not accomodated at Carmine, are bused out, either to Adobe or to an underutilized elementary nearby.[2]

The commitment to neighborhood elementary schools is interlaced with residential development in Prairie Heights and the surrounding areas within district boundaries. There is a relatively high proportion of newer single family houses and a correspondingly low proportion of low cost and low-rent housing. In general, the neighborhoods corresponding to the elementaries are quite homogeneous (by race and social class) because of the residential development and neighborhood school boundaries coincide. In this way characteristics of classroom groups are made more predictable and more alike.

PHISD District Policy nowhere explicitly requires neighborhood attendance zones. Their existence is assumed. It warns, though, that realignment of boundaries may sometimes be necessary in order to make efficient use of physical plant.

> Attendance Zones
>
> The growth of population and resulting continual shift of scholastic population within the boundaries of the Prairie Heights Independent School District make necessary periodic realignment of attendance zones. As a matter of policy and

> procedure the Superintendent and his associates shall determine the attendance zones for particular buildings in keeping with (1) the capacity of the building; (2) practical attendance problems in particular buildings; and (3) natural boundaries where practical. Such a policy is essential for the usage of pupil-load in the facilities of the District. Each such attendance zone shall be a single, non-racial system of attendance zones.
>
> PHISD Board Policy B-5117

Besides efficiency in use of facilities, there may be another consideration in constructing attendance, maintenance of homegeneous pupil populations in each school.

In addition to limiting the range of student differences within schools, a neighborhood school policy promotes certainty about student characteristics by precluding movement of pupils among schools in the system. Short of buying a different house, parents can change their children's schools only by complying with an arduous process of petition to the Deputy Superintendent, Administration, backed by favorable written advisory reports from the principals of the schools a student wishes, respectively, to leave and to enter. Clearly the schools cannot prevent turnover of students. It is endemic in a growing suburb where houses are said to turn over every five years, on the average, and apartments at a much faster rate. As one component of the neighborhood school policy, restricting movement of pupils between schools reinforces the effect of drawing school attendance zones to coincide with successive expansions of real estate development.[3]

PLAN A: PROVISIONS AND RECIPES FOR DEALING WITH EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

In pursuit of equity, it is necessary for schools to recognize that some pupils require more resources than others. Special education programs provide for this need and incidentally lessen for classroom teachers the burden of coping with widely divergent groups. However, Plan A also produces problems in application at the individual school level. As was explained in Chapter III, special education funds are available from the state for meticulously defined groups of children. In general, those who qualify must demonstrate individual need that is unrelated to cultural, social, or ethnic background.[4] From the teachers' and principals' perspective, though, a child who appears to be achieving well below his capacity needs help, and arguments about the source of the difficulty can sound academic. Therefore teachers and principals in low achieving schools can find their belief in the equitable distribution of Plan A resources strained, seeing that high achieving schools receive the same allotment, and finding that their students are denied help help by the restrictive wording of the recipe.

## The Resource Group: Problems of Provision and Recipe Application

The specific Plan A program that causes such equity problems is Resource. In order to qualify for this category of help, a child must satisfy state requirements by presenting evidence of academic achievement no better than one standard deviation below that which would be predicted by his IQ test score. The weakness of this criterion is that child being tested individually will tend to outdo himself, scoring much higher in reading and math tests than he does in ordinary class tests. The IQ score, however, does not rise to the same degree (it may even fall) in individually administered tests. Thus, the discrepancy so apparent to classroom teachers can disappear in individual testing, and according to regulations, need is not demonstrated.

Further contributing to perceived inequity is a district rule limiting admission to children scoring 6 months below grade level at 1st grade, one year below in 2nd and 3rd grade, two years below in 4th, 5th, and 6th. Whether a particular child need meet both state and district criteria or only one seems not to be clear to all participants in admissions decisions. Although in recent principals' meetings, there has been some discussion of attempting to standardize admissions proceedings, at present standards are not uniform throughout the district. For example, we were told that children who have been in Resource at their previous PHISD school are often dismissed when they enter Adobe. Cited as an example of inappropriate placement was a second grade boy transferring into Adobe from Resource at another school with achievement scores at grade 4. This example is corroborated by a Duncan ARD meeting we observed, where a high IQ boy was admitted to Resource on the state criterion, though his achievement was above grade level. Clearly it was assumed at Duncan that since he met the state standard, he was qualified. A decision to admit a boy in similar circumstances was made by the principal at Baldy on her own authority--after she searched in vain for guidance through a stack of district policy directives and made two phone calls to the administration building without results.[5]

If the effects of such lack of uniformity were randomly distributed, there would, perhaps, be little cause for dissatisfaction. However, the testing distortion seems to affect children from less privileged backgrounds more than others. And since the neighborhood school policy concentrates these children in just a few PHISD schools, striking differences occur among schools in the degree to which resources available fit apparent need. Most generously served under the present allocation scheme is Carmine, where one-third of the students are part of the Resource group and many more use special equipment and materials provided by Resource. Carmine maintains a Resource teacher at each grade level except 5th and 6th, which share a Resource teacher. These teachers work with Resource students, both in the Resource room and in regular classrooms. They do not, of course, work directly with non-Resource children. Carmine, like all PHISD schools, follows state law in assigning Resource teachers strictly to work with remedial students; however, some of their time is spent developing lessons for the assistant teachers to use with gifted children. And gifted children at Carmine use the Resource Room. A group of gifted first graders, for instance, comes to Resource every morning with an assistant teacher to use the System 80 terminals, the Language Master, and other special kits and materials ordered for enrichment of regular classes. Thus, Resource teachers at Carmine generally keep in mind the needs of all students, not just remedial students, when they order materials.

In marked contrast to Carmine--and to each other--are the remaining sample schools, whose needs and resources available are summarized below.

| | Pop. | Pupils in Resource | Estimated Need for Resource | Resource Teachers Allotted |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Carmine | 600 | 200 | same | 5 |
| Adobe | 650 | 100 | 300* | 3 |
| Baldy | 450 | 30 | same | 1 1/2 |
| Duncan | 500 | 60 | same | 2 |

*Estimated by school principal

There is a difference, more striking in reality than in the numbers, between even the two most adequately served schools, Baldy and Duncan. Baldy, with less than 30 students in Resource, has available two full classrooms, a full-time Resource teacher for children from grades 1 through 4, and a half-time teacher for those from 5th and 6th. There is ample room to hold Resource classes in attractive special facilities, and there is enough leeway in the teachers' schedules so that children can be withdrawn inconspicuously from regular classes. They come to Resource at natural breaks in routine, for example, just after lunch. Usually Resource children are not taken out of class during "solid subjects" (reading, math, and social studies), but preferably during art or health. These arrangements minimize the children's embarrassment about being labeled "Resource" and preserve the continuity of their presence in regular classes. Duncan, in contrast, must serve twice as many children with little additional staff. Its two Resource teachers share one classroom, to which they have recently moved from a storage room. Here each works with groups of about six pupils. The Duncan teachers also work with Resource students in the regular classrooms, taking two or three at a back table while the rest of the class work on their own. The children who come to Resource at Baldy and Duncan are sometimes slow learners, but there are a number who score at grade level on achievement tests. Resource teachers work with these bright students to build the motivation or skills they need to fulfill their potential for high achievement.

Adobe School is clearly the most constrained under the present Plan A allocation scheme. With a need, in the principal's opinion, greater than Carmine's, the school can offer Resource help to only half as many children. In this situation, standards for admission, supposedly set by state law, must float. Whereas children reading at grade level at Baldy and Duncan sometimes go to Resource so they can do even better, Resource at Adobe cannot come close to accomodating all the children who read below grade level. The main hindrance to enlarging Resource at Adobe is State law. Many of the children whom the principal cites as needing Resource are from ethnic minorities or are recent immigrants to the U.S. It is impossible to certify that their language difficulties are not due to their cultural differentness. Many more children who could probably benefit from Resource are squeezed out by the difficulty of establishing the required one standard deviation gap between IQ and achievement scores. A child whose IQ tests 120 can qualify easily under this rule if his academic achievement lags at all. On the other hand, a child whose IQ is in the low normal range around 85 is not "expected" to achieve at grade level; he can be seriously dificient academically and yet not qualify for Plan A help. Adobe School, for whatever reason, (the guidance counselor believes the reason is discontinuities in schooling caused by family instability), enrolls a high proportion of students whose IQs test low normal. They have not learned to score high on ability or achievement tests; therefore there is considered to be no discrepancy, and Plan A, designed primarily for the underachieving individual, makes no provision for this large group.[6] The contrast with Carmine, which has many students among its neighborhood population who are comparable to these Adobe pupils, is striking. There seems to be no alternative to believing that the difference in the treatment of the two schools is due to Federal intervention. With court surveillance or the threat of it, resources and new recipes are found.

## Other Programs for Other Problems

Unlike Resource, where qualifications for admission defy continuous heroic attempts at definition by state, district, and school officials, most Plan A programs meet limited and obvious needs. Included among these would be blindness and deafness, extreme retardation, and extreme learning disabilities or emotional distrurbance for which PHISD maintains centralized classes at Comanche School. The educable mentally retarded, EMR, children are taught at several schools in PHISD, including Baldy. These students spend most of their school day with a special education teacher, but they are "mainstreamed" into their age-appropriate grade levels for physical education, music, lunch, and recess. They perform enthusiastically with their "regular grade class" on PTA nights and seem well accepted by the group. Teachers note that kids quite spontaneously make allowances for these children that they would not make for others.

There also existed at Baldy in 1978-79 (though continued funding is said to be in jeopardy at the district level) another special class called

Transition. The stated purpose of the Transition class is to hold in abeyance classification into grades for a few primary age children who, though performing in some respect below age level, appear to be strong candidates for rejoining the mainstream--with a little timely help. These children are identified in first grade and placed in a class of less than ten students with an aide and a teacher. Here they get special attention for their problem, which is often slower than average social maturation, but may be a physical impairment. (One six year old class member was recovering from a stroke that had paralyzed her left side.) Whatever the disabilities, they are considered correctable within one to two years, after which the child is expected to rejoin the regular track.[7] Transition is an anomaly in PHISD grouping schemes, a class whose purpose is to prevent premature classification. From all reports it is educationally successful but organizationally vulnerable. Its continued existence defies a trend in the district to strengthen age-graded classification, which is discussed in detail in the Grade Placement section of the chapter.[8]

Overall, the immediate effect of Plan A programs on regular classroom groups is to exclude the seriously disabled: the range of student diversity is lessened; planning is easier. A more insidious effect is to complicate decisions about equity both at the district and at the building level. To the extent that Plan A is seen as an extra resource for dealing with randomly distributed special needs, it is a recipe for solving the problem of meeting individual needs without depriving anyone of his fair share. However, where there appears to be a large demand in schools with high minority enrollment (Adobe and Carmine), Plan A becomes at once a scarce resource to be sought and a stigma to be shunned. In making allocations among schools, the district appears to defer to higher authority. In deference to the Federal desegregation order, the district grants Carmine a disproportionate share of available Plan A resources. What remains is divided among the other schools based on formula emphasizing sameness with minimal regard to need.

## GRADE LEVEL PLACEMENT WITHIN SCHOOLS

### The Age Grouping Recipe

In the grouping decisions discussed so far, policies made at the district level or higher have been most influential. State law sets the minimum age for entrance; state funding formulas dictate class size; district-drawn attendance zones maintain the neighborhood character of schools. Thus, when we look at the individual school population, we see a set of children ranging in age from 5 to 12, none severely disabled, differing little in social background. This population is to be subdivided into groups of about 25 children.

Formal authority for this step in the sorting belongs to the principal, but in fact he or she is bound to a recipe, age grouping, whose guiding norm is the belief that age predicts academic achievement. The process of schooling as presently constituted, a process, essentially, for moving people through and out in batches, depends on this recipe. The recipe routinizes grouping decisions and preempts questions of fairness. Following the age-grouping recipe allows for the same materials to be presented to all pupils at the same speed by teachers with identical formal preparation: thus the bureaucratic need for rationalized procedure is served. By the same device, questions of equity can be answered by demonstrating formal equality. Promotion by age insures that eventually a certain percentage of children will fail to learn. That is, if a child of 9 is promoted to grade 4 without even a rudimentary grasp of primary reading skills, under the present arrangements, he will never be able to make up that loss. The system cannot afford to provide at later stages the intense coaching available in primary grades. Nevertheless, in almost every case, that 9 year old will be advanced, and the system, having met the requirements of formal equality, need not assume responsibility for failure. To the extent that variation from age-predicted achievement occurs, other arrangements must be made. We have discussed some of these above, Plan A and the court-ordered plan for Carmine, for instance. Teacher norms of fairness and recipes for individualized instruction, which we discuss below, constitute other solutions. The strength of the belief in the age-grouping recipe is demonstrated, however, by the elaborateness of the procedures required to justify any departure from it.

## Recipes for Legitimizing Departures

When a child is held back, the decision is made by the principal, subject to veto by parents as prescribed by state law. The classroom teacher's role in this decision is to recommend retention to the principal and to provide the principal with adequate written records and supporting evidence from the school diagnostician to back the case for failure to promote. Teachers are cautioned not to discuss these matters with parents until the principal has been fully informed, has made a decision, and has talked with the parents about it. Because the decision not to promote is traumatic for parents and child, every effort is made to prepare for it early in the year. Conferences with parents are arranged, tests performed, special education teachers consulted, parent appeals anticipated. As one principal told us:

> I just found out last week that there is a new law. Now, if you retain a child, the parents can appeal the decision. Of course, we want to avoid that. If the parent says not to retain the child, now I want to document the data on the child and the parents' refusal so later they won't turn around and sue the school district for not educating their child. I want to have it on record that we scheduled seven conferences with the parent, and she never showed.

An incident related to us by another principal makes the need for this procedure vividly apparent. The principal has been talking about a student whose work was not on grade level. The child's teacher had written the parents, suggesting that they come to school to discuss possible options, summer school remedial work or, possibly, repeating a grade. Rather than answer the letter, the parents arrived unannounced one day at the classroom:

> He and his wife, and he stands about 6'4" and weighs over 200lbs., big man, and he got the teacher out of the classroom to come out in the hall there and his opening remark to her was, "You white-ass wench, what do you mean saying my child is dumb". I mean.. just for openers, you know. And she's just a little woman and it really scared her. So she didn't know what to do and he really tore into her and had her in tears. I wasn't here and she tried to explain that notes had been sent home, report cards had gone home and we wanted to have her tested and he wouldn't let us test her. We wanted to maybe see about summer school and she would not go to summer school and she would not be retained. He says, "Why isn't she learning then?" The

> teacher pointed out that in the last six weeks of school she had missed two weeks and this would hurt any student and he said "Now you've got to come up with a better answer than that." And he was just really belligerent to her and he says, "They call me 'Snowball' and nobody messes with Snowball." This is really scary. As it turned out the teacher kept on the point, "Look, all we want to do is try to help your child." She even had the little girl out there. They got the little girl out there and had her arm around the little girl the whole time out were talking. I guess the dad finally calmed down and realized that we did want to help the little girl.

The kinds of problems that lead to a recommendation not to promote are illustrated by the following interview with a PHISD teacher:

| | |
|---|---|
| Researcher: | Where is the cut-off between a child who will be retained in the same grade and one who will go on...do they do it by behavior or do they do it by the level of reading... |
| Teacher: | The total child...like I have a little girl that I am considering, thinking that she might do well staying back. This child does not turn in her work, is rather immature, does not--the psychologist calls it--attend and that's probably the best thing I can think of. She never gets the paper out and gets the pencil out and gets it all down at any time and this is an immaturity. She is scrambling in her desk with bits of paper or a sack of junk or something all the time.. well, you saw her yesterday. She had a sack, and I don't know what she had in that sack, but it was all over everywhere, she would not get her handwriting out, she would not... I mean, it just went on and on and on...you know, you can praise, you can come at it from every angle or aspect and it's still the same. We have come a long way with this child, though. We had an educational plan. I got her into a ARD meeting, got her into Resource the first of the year. She wasn't in Resource last year. I have been working really diligently trying to get all this together and I really felt real strongly that this child had some emotional problems because she wore this cape-hood-outfittish-skirt all the time (whatever you want to call it). Whatever the child needed at that moment, it could have been a cape or if she wanted to hide and lots of times she would get under this hood and go to sleep...so that was one of the first things that we needed to do was get this hood or whatever the thing was off of the child because she had carried it all last year. I found this out by talking to the second |

grade teacher, it was like a security blanket. So in our educational plan, this was one of the things that we tried to do, that we said we were going to do first with this child was get this thing off and back. Well, what we are going to have to do though is not say anything to her about it because if you do then it becomes a bigger deal and she'll hang on to it more. I never say anything about the thing but try to praise her and find things that she can do. She helps me everyday clean the room and I brag on everything that she can do which is not all that much, but everything she does, I brag on it and all of a sudden, just one day, we didn't need the blanket anymore.. I haven't seen it in.. I don't know, I should have written down because I've got...soemwhere about Halloween, thereabout, I haven't seen it anymore. Charlotte helped me decide that this was.. and the psychologist.

Researcher: Is she having counselling as well?

Teacher: Yes she is, she is working with the counselor.

Researcher: So it's the whole gamut. Low in reading, low in math, immaturity for the age and....

Teacher: Yes it is...she is way below grade level. She tested out like six years old or something like that, I don't know but I could look...but just way below grade level in everything and has an attention span of about three minutes. But I see that she is doing well on our plan. Short specific requirements, oral type directions--don't expect her to read any directions and follow because she can't -- like you do a very yound child, everything is oral, in short periods of time, but I am insisting that she, whenever...I'm fixing to put a handwriting order on the board today. I put one on the board and when they come in that's their requirement that they do like yesterday was planned and I am fixing to do another one but I do it according to what we are studying a lot, you know, handwriting worth...but I am requiring that she do this, that she sit down and begin, whether she ever finsihes it or not is going to be one thing but get the paper out, get the pencil out--find one, she never has one--sit down and attempt to do this, and I am insisting that she do this.

This child's problems are the ones that regularly come up when retention in grade is recommended: immaturity and below grade level achievement scores. Other factors that will be considered are the child's physical development, social skills, and eligibility for Resource. Unless everything comes together to indicate that he will be successful on a second run through the 3rd grade curriculum, there is a strong presumption that he should be kept with his age mates. In elementary school, it is usually considered better to fail reading in one's proper age group than to be excluded from it.

The guiding norm that children grouped together in one classroom should not differ very much among themselves in age is shared and taken for granted by parents and pupils as well as teachers, principals and administrators. Among parents, the belief in this grouping procedure reaches to the point that some parents would rather have their child in his correct age group and virtually failing than have him in his learning peer group and succeeding.

Parents, like teachers and school administrators, publicly affirm their belief in merit promotion procedures. Not so publicly, however, most also believe in the correctness of age-grouping, or right to student position by time. These procedural rules come into conflict when retention decisions are being made.[9] Right to position on merit is different from right to position as a result of time spent, or age. In elementary schools, age grouping, and its implied affirmation of the right to position by virture of age takes precedence over merit except in the most extreme cases. This feeling is so strong among teachers that they consider placing students outside their social age group only when the child's need appears obvious and desperate. After all, in elementary schools, you cannot get rid of failures. Promotion based on merit (or readiness for the next step) in its ultimate version might lead to individuals staying around for very long periods of time before they succeed (if in fact they ever do). Each grade would leave its own residue of failure. Rather, it is necessary and more efficient for schooling that students be promoted at the margins based on age-specific rights, at least until the point where they can in fact be processed out of the system. Thus although conscious of community pressure for promotion on merit, accepting it themselves in principle, many teachers nevertheless, with embarrassment and apologies, admit, "I just can't do that to a child. It's not fair. I guesss you'd have to say that--this is awful to say--I favor social promotion."

## CONSTRUCTING HOMEROOMS

As responsibility for making decisions about how children are grouped is delegated down closer to the classroom, concern about having to deal with uncertainty in student characteristics increases and questions of fairness are confronted directly. Procedures for assigning children to homerooms reflect the greater immediacy of these problems. PHISD policy gives authority for assigning pupils to homerooms to principals alone, within guidelines suggesting a mixture of academic abilities in each class (interpreted as equality among homerooms) as well as attention to the individual needs of students (equity as fairness). The following recipe, derived from practice at one of our sample schools, represents normal procedure.

### The Recipe for Evening the Load

Enrollment Work Sheet Grade 2 (1979-80)
(Form prepared by the principal)

| | |
|---|---|
| Boys (academically high) | Girls (academically high) |
| Boys (academically low) | Girls (academically low) |
| Boys (other) | Girls (Other) |

1. Put an * by students who are behavior problems.

2. List separately the names of students who should not be placed in the same class. Include these children on this list but I need to know who they are in case I have to make changes.

3. On a separate sheet, list retainees.

Three of these worksheets, when completed by the children's 1st grade teachers and approved by the principal, will form the following year's 2nd grade homerooms. In filling in the sheets, teachers settle the issues involved in the following order:

1. List combinations of two and three students (always all-boy or all-girl combinations) who exacerbate each other's behavior problems and so need to be separated.

2. Insure equal boy-girl distribution in each homeroom.

3. Insure equal distribution to each homeroom of high, average, and low achieving students.

4. Insure equal distribution of behavior problems.

5. Consider parent preferences for particular homeroom teachers, but comply sparingly, for each change requires compensating readjustments involving steps 1-4.

## Practical Applications: Confronting Contingencies

This recipe is followed in all the sample schools, though it assumes a stable student population, in practice unattainable. Because schools vary in stability, as in other student characteristics, each school must create its own variations on the recipe. One way schools do this is by varying the degree of principals' involvement in the grouping process.

Baldy School, situated in a stable neighborhood, can make up class lists in May that will hold, with manageable changes, for the following year. Diversity among students, too, is less than in other schools in the district. As a result, list making can be viewed to a considerable degree as an administrative procedure. As the school year ends, the principal requests from each teacher the names of her eight highest achieving students (in rank order), her five lowest, any children who present special behavior problems, children who show unusual leadership ability for good or for ill, and combinations of children who cause trouble for the teacher when together. Using these lists first, and then consulting with teachers and with the counselor to get a good match of teacher and student personalities, the principal draws up homeroom sections for the following year. She will also consider parent requests for a particular teacher if the parents will come to the school and convince her that their choice is based on "sound educational principle" and not on personal preference. We are assured by one of the long-time Baldy teachers that principals can balance workloads satisfactorily by this method, given a few years' experience.

Carmine School, because it is dependent on volunteers to fill court-ordered quotas, faces some uncertainty about attendance. Volunteer parents, merely by failing to renew their children's attendance contracts for the following year, could threaten the school's continued existence. Teachers at Carmine, who are also volunteers, for none is assigned to Carmine without her own consent, face a special kind of uncertainty:

unusual diversity of culture and academic motivation in every classroom, by court order. Possibly for these reasons, teachers are involved in homeroom assignment procedures to a greater degree at Carmine than at other schools.

At a work session we observed, for instance, first and second grade teachers were making up homeroom sections for next year's second grade. They were constrained, of course, by the desegregation order, to include 10 volunteers, 5 girls and 5 boys, and 10 neighborhood children, 5 girls and 5 boys, in each class. An additional constraint is the informal understanding that no volunteer will be placed in a homeroom without at least one other volunteer from his home neighborhood. Parent preferences are another important force limiting teachers' choices at Carmine. At this session, all requests for particular second grade teachers were honored, and they were so numerous they had to be assigned priority by date of filing. During the meeting, one mother phoned in a request without having filled out the required form, and her wish, too, was granted. After parent requests, academic performance was considered. As at Baldy, the present year teachers had prepared lists of their best and poorest students, and these were distributed as evenly as possible among classes. Finally, as at Baldy, these teachers were concerned about behavior problems: "those students can't be in the same class, they giggle all the time together."

Here, after the teachers had made lists that satisfied all the normal choice criteria as well as the additional constraints imposed by the court order and the need to retain volunteer students, there was almost no maneuvering space left for exercise of principals' discretion. Nor was there great need. The special nature of Carmine's population ensures diversity of student population, but at the same time it provides stability. Composed with difficulty, Carmine's class lists, by and large, hold.

The other two sample schools, Duncan and Adobe, are more typical of the Prairie Heights school district, being located in neighborhoods with relatively mobile populations. Class lists prepared in May according to the standard Recipe, in these circumstances, can be only preliminary. Nevertheless, every effort is made to begin the year, at least, with the workload evenly distributed. To this end, the principals allow teachers to work out the homeroom lists among themselves, reserving final approval only. By late fall, often, workloads that had seemed fair have become unbalanced as pupils withdraw and new students with untested academic and social characteristics replace them. At Adobe School, in December, 1979, for instance, workload imbalance had reached critical proportions in 6th grade. Three teachers were overloaded with 33, 33, and 32 pupils each. A fourth section was approved by the district and an experienced substitute appointed as its full time regular teacher. Since there is no established recipe for making up new sections at midyear, the principal and the teachers improvised. The principal allowed the teachers to work out the distribution among themselves. Their first inclination was to follow the standard recipe, giving first consideration to fairness among teachers, starting with numbers. From each existing homeroom they decided to subtract a total of 7 pupils, producing thereby a new set of 26, 26, 25 and 21 for the new teacher (perhaps lightening her load to compensate for the difficulty she would have in organizing a class from scratch on a week's notice). Their next step was to designate the 7 each proposed to part with. Again following the normal recipe, they agreed that each would choose two bad students, two average, and three good. Only when they had done this did it occur to the group that students--and, more to the point, parents--would rebel at their arrogance. Scratch that list. They decided to ask for 7 volunteers from each classroom. Unfortunately for equity, the overwhelming proportion of volunteers were "baddies." Those good students who had tried to cooperate protested when they had a look at their new classmates, but the teachers, with the principal's backing, held fast. They had goofed, and they would have to live with the results, and so, to their sorrow, would the students.

Looking back from practical improvisation in individual schools to the standard recipe represented by the Enrollment Work Sheet and even further to the district guidelines on which the recipe is based, how might the operating priorities for homeroom assignment be summarized? The guidelines suggest heterogeneous homerooms and consideration for the special needs of individual students, two versions of equity that are completely reconcilable in theory, but only partially so in practice. In practice, as the Work Sheet recipe indicates, equity for teachers as well as for pupils, must be achieved. Heterogeneous classrooms in that light appear to be a by-product of distributing teaching load fairly rather than a principled insistence on diversity.[10] In practice, then, the first principle of homeroom assignment is fairness among teachers. The second is that diversity must be controlled. We have seen that higher level decisions have put limits on the diversity of the group being considered for placement in homerooms within a school. The groups being being put together by teachers and principals are homegeneous by family income, and the widely divergent, the mentally retarded, the deaf and the blind, the very immature, have been placed in spcial classes. Those with limited learning disabilities will be in Resource part-time. Those remaining are normal, everyday kids with manageable variation in academic ability. It would seem to be a reasonable conclusion that PHISD's homeroom grouping policy consists of an unstated agreement that potentially disruptive deviation is controlled at the district level,.and the unavoidable residual uncertainty is distributed among teachers, share and share alike.

## BATTLESTARS AND COWBOYS: GROUPING WITHIN CLASSES

### Official Recipes

The PHISD procedure for making decisions about grouping within classrooms is in striking contrast to the procedure for forming school and homeroom groups. The neighborhood school and heterogeneous homeroom polices, which limit possible organizational patterns in the classroom, are taken-for-granted: no attempt is made to justify or explain them. In contrast, the district "Grouping Policy," which in fact concerns only grouping within homerooms or within a grade level in one building, begins with a statement of philosophy and continues with two pages of guidelines for implementation of grouping in general, followed by three pages of explicit directions grouping in reading, the one academic subject in which all elementary students must, according to district policy, be grouped by skill. It seems likely that pressure, or potential pressure, from the community accounts for this exceptional explicitness. That is because "grouping" policy, insofar as it constitutes labeling children, is bound to generate controversy. Of course, assignment to Baldy School, say, rather than to Adobe is labeling of an even more powerful kind, but district policy preempts that issue by seeming to make neighborhood assignment automatic. Grade level placement, another possible trouble source, is similarly preempted by what amounts to virtually automatic promotion by the calendar. By effectively removing school level discretion on these larger issues, district policy at once serves equity - no one school or child is discriminated against - and limits community intervention to the relatively manageable question of reading group assignment at the relatively safe level of the individual school. Having been made responsible for individual assignment, the school is supported by a district supplied set of guidelines. Responsibility for the substance of the guidelines is diffused by committee authorship (4 elementary principals, 4 primary teachers, 4 intermediate teachers). In the guidelines, goals are spelled out in the most uncontroversial and neutral language imaginable. Ongoing interpretation of the goals in particular situations, however, is the responsibility of principals and teachers.

### Practical Applications and Situational Interpretations

According to the guidelines,

> "The purpose of grouping in the PHISD is to meet the educational needs of each student. Grouping will facilitate the classroom teacher's individualization of instruction to attain curriculum goals." (PHISD Policy Manual, August, 1978).

In actuality, many kinds of group arrangements have been dreamt of and enacted within this philosophy. Long-time teachers have recalled for us the widespread grouping by level of achievement in many academic subjects in the 1960s. Grouping across homerooms by reading skill was actually required as late as 1972 and was general practice until 1978. However, since the arrival of a new Superintendent, new grouping guidelines have been published under, of course, the same general umbrella of goals. Children are to spend as much as possible of their school day with one teacher in homerooms made up of children of varying academic achievement. The unstated basis of the new grouping recipe (termed philosophy in the Policy Manual) is a distincition between ability and skill. Any grouping on the basis of differences thought to be long term and fundamental is disapproved (ability grouping). Grouping that is short term, ever shifting, and based on specific learned skills or interests is desirable. With this distinction in mind, one can make sense of the multifarious forms and seeming contradictions in grouping practice that appear in the sample schools.

### (1) Cross-Homeroom Grouping with Further Sub-grouping

Take, for example, the case that is closest to sixties-style ability grouping, the recipe that calls for arraying all the youngsters in a particular school grade by reading score and then assigning above-grade level readers to one teacher for reading instruction, at-grade readers to a second, and below-grade readers to a third. In one of our sample schools, this seems not to be done at all. In a second school, this procedure is followed (in grades 4 and 5 only), though it is believed to be not entirely approved. "I know this is contrary to policy," one teacher there told us, "but we do teach reading to advanced, average, and below-grade-level readers separately." It is important to note that these teachers' beliefs that they were acting against district policy was based on their perception that these reading groups are, in fact, permanent: most children who are above grade level in primary years increase their differential as they get older. And high reading level correlates with high performance in other subjects. On the other hand, at the two schools that must cope with extreme variation in academic achievement, Adobe and Carmine, cross-homeroom reading groups and even math groups are formed without apology, beginning in first grade.[11]

Of course, cross-homeroom grouping, in itself, does not produce homogeneous reading classes. The high, middle, and low groups are further subdivided into five parts (e.g., class a group of 25 has 5 sub-groups within it) an arrangement which affords, on the average, 10 minutes of the teacher's attention to each group each day. With a very low group, for example, the lowest third of Adobe's 6th grade, even this expedient does not suffice to cope with student variation. Here, during a typical reading period, the teacher uses a common sequence of assignments for 27 of her 29 pupils. Each one moves through the sequence at his or her own pace (except one student who alternates between sitting next to the teacher with a windbreaker over his head and shuttling to the office for a talking to). When a student has completed an assignment, or is stuck, or needs reassurance, he signs up on a waiting list, indicating after his name by the letters G or E whether he requires grade or explanation. (We suppose these, categories having survived in such circumstances, must indicate the *sine qua non* of the schooling/teaching function). The teacher then summons pupils to her desk exactly as a crowd-harassed maitre d' summons hungry diners to the table. The line goes the more slowly for her having to spend a good deal of time calming and cajoling -managing- those who wait. Meanwhile, the teacher must also allow time for those who finish early. (Even working every night she can only prepare 4 or 5 assignment sets ahead.) To hold the fast students near the average pace, she provides filmstrips, tapes, records, magazines, and games at the back of the room and issues twenty minute passes for their use. Now the 28th and 29th pupils have just arrived this month from the USSR and speak no English at all. (A Vietnamese newcomer also speaks no English, but is able to do the written work quite well, though she needs continuous encouragement from the teacher.) For the two Russian girls, the teacher has assigned one student volunteer each day as tutor. She gives the volunteers stacks of pictures and flashcards and urges them to use their good judgement and lots of imagination. The ongoing classroom situations that occur when the lowest groups are formed illuminate the recipes for making do or the craft knowledge of teachers contexted by bureaucratic structure. The low groups strip away from the process, however, the rationalizations possible when teaching and managing high achievers. What becomes reward and enrichment for high achievers is relief for teachers handling 20 or more students experiencing difficulty and often not interested.[12]

In the face of such exigencies, the District Guidelines for implementing the grouping philosophy express three concerns: authority; flexibility; and decreasing nurturance.

(2) Operative Authority and Flexibility

The authority line runs from teachers, who must submit written justification for their grouping arrangements to principals, to the area Executive Director, who must approve any changes. In fact, we see that principals are not requiring such details as current lists of names and that arrangements vary by school. The reasons for this are easy to see (and are discussed in some detail in the previous chapter). Practically, it would require heavy expenditure of principals' and Directors' energy to verify teachers' conformity to the guidelines in individual cases. Organizationally, such inspection would, in effect, make central administration responsible for individual outcomes and subject to parental pressure.

The second concern of the Guidelines is that all grouping patterns be flexible. Children must be able to move in and out of groups easily as their skill level changes. For reading, to achieve flexibility is difficult. Even in the lowest grades, groups formed in September tend to become fixed by February. Children who were in "high" groups one year will be in "high" the next, more often than not. Teachers are understandably reluctant to move children "down", and therefore, if in doubt, they place a child low, hoping to move him up later. The district specifically condemns the practices of moving children down for misbehavior or promising children that hard work will result in upward placement. In organizational terms, the Grouping Guidelines follow the familiar pattern: controversy is averted by stressing the tentative status of classification, however permanent it may be in practice; responsibility for outcomes is relegated to the lowest level possible, in this case the student, with the reservation that no promises about effort resulting in achievement are being made. Finally, lest this theme sound cynical, the substance of the guidelines truly promotes the best interests of students as a group, and teachers administer and teach students with unfailing concern for individual differences.

(3) Recipes for Decreasing Nurturance

The third main objective of the Guidelines for Grouping is to stress the importance of maintaining a close tie between the child and his homeroom teacher. She is to be responsible for monitoring his progress in all subjects and for communicating with parents, a policy whose educational, as well as administrative advantages are clear.

Only this third concern hints at the use of grouping for nurturance. In fact, besides its usefulness for dealing with diverse academic skills, grouping is arranged so as to provide high nurturance in the early years, decreasing to conform with secondary school patterns at grade 6. With the shifting of organizational pattern between these periods, the important transition is made from child-centered to bureaucratic classroom. In the beginning the school adapts (as well as it can) to the child; by 6th grade, the child (if he is going to be successful) has adapted to the needs of the school.

In practice this means that the kinds of classroom interactions and groups that a child takes part in change with the years. Kindergarten and primary children spend practically all their school day with one teacher. At most a teacher who plays the piano well may take all her school's first graders for their twice-a-week music class, while her colleague next door, perhaps more athletic, will taken them for P.E. Regularly, though less frequently, these classes will be visited by a counselor, who may present a film or a puppet show (on sharing or making the most of one's abilities, for example), while the teacher runs for coffee in the lounge. Every week, the librarian gathers the primary classes in a story circle, as the teacher slips into the back row to listen and observe. In these grades, learning groups within classrooms are kept small enough so that every pupil has frequent eye (and other personal) contact with the teacher. That the children need and want this contact is documented in the socialization literature and in the practice of teaching the early grades.

By fourth grade, students begin to move to special classrooms with specialist teachers for music and P.E. Much of their work is still done in small "reading groups," but by this time the principal justification for such groups is to provide for differences in academic skill, where the range has broadened greatly since grade 1, and less important is the chance small groups give for intimate interaction. Finally, at the 6th grade, nurturance gives way in some respects to concern for adapting to secondary school patterns. Teachers adopt a more distant and formal stance toward students. One way they accomplish this is to teach almost entirely to the whole classroom group. At 6th grade in all the schools, teachers specialize by academic subject, teaching reading or math to perhaps 100 students, who come in batches of 25. Sixth grade students also go to the P.E. teacher, boys and girls together as in 4th and 5th, and now students may choose to take band from a secondary music teacher assigned part time to the elementary school, or to take stringed instruments (available in some schools), or choir (if they qualify), as well as plain "music." Sixth grade students may spend several hours a week as street crossing guards or as aides in the office, where they work with clerical staff. A few may act as teachers' assistants in the lower grades. While they are thus venturing more and more outside the homeroom, within it they are less and less "grouped." At the highest elementary level, teachers are concerned about fostering the child's independence both from the teacher and from the small supportive circle. Where possible and appropriate, they favor "whole group" activities; that is, the class is given a uniform assignment, and each individual is graded according to his success in completing the given task. At Duncan School, there is no grouping, even for reading, at grade 6. All students, except 5 who go to Resource for their reading instruction, use the same text. The few in each section who cannot manage these assignments are quietly given alternative work. By these arrangements, then, children are gradually acclimatized to the social order most congenial to what we have called the bureaucratic norm, the batching of children, standardization of materials, routinization of instruction (or in vernacular--how to make do in junior high).

The teacher norm nevertheless persists. When teachers make the grouping decisions, "reducing uncertainty" and "promoting equity," though obviously operating, seem distant abstractions. When teachers organize classroom instruction, their priorities appear to be, first, to enhance, or at least not damage, every child's self esteem and to create an atmosphere of mutual acceptance within the classroom; secondly, on this foundation, to guide children's learning. Without any formal planning, however, the crucial accomodation between bureaucratic and teacher norms has been accomplished. By 6th grade, teachers feel that the child's greatest need is to find his place in the bureaucratic system.

## ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS

Of necessity, grouping decisions based on equal treatment for all and maximum certainty about student characteristics result in sameness within classrooms. To counteract this undesired outcome, espcially for the very bright, the PHISD provides three formal programs of enrichment for elementary pupils. One is offered at Carmine only, as part of their Pacesetter program and includes an expanded curriculum, improved facilities, and an extensive before and after-school program. The other programs (small efforts by comparison) are Operation REACH and Talents Unlimited.

The Pacesetter program provides the magnet to attract vounteers to Carmine. Its special attractions, not available in other schools, include an art specialist, a primary P.E. teacher, Spanish instruction in grades 1-6, computer-assisted instruction, a primary reading center. The extended day program at Carmine is administered separately from the regular program. It provides supervision for children from 7AM until school opens as well as an extensive after-school care program, including sports, crafts, children's theater, and private lessons (at family expesnse) in ballet, piano, voice, and instrumental music. With this program, PHISD has apparently been able to attract sufficient white volunteers to satisfy the Federal court that district-wide busing for racial balance is unnecessary.

Having seen the Pacesetter program, parents of gifted children in other schools pressed for a study of needs in the district at large, and this study was completed by district officials in 1977-78. Its conclusion was that there existed no special planning for children of high academic ability (children who score at or above the 95th percentile on IQ tests). Two programs were introduced in 1978-79 to fill this need. One, called Operation REACH (Realizing Excellence in Academic Cognition Heuristically), was provided in seven schools the first year and extended to all elementary schools in September, 1979, when the state of Texas provided PHISD a $60,000 grant. This amount with $120,000 from school district funds, has enabled the schools to enroll 491 students this year, about one in ten of those nominated by their classmates, teachers, and parents. Admission criteria, designed to select the top 5% of the academically talented in grades 4-6, included a weighted mix of California Test of Basic Skills test scores, IQ, a teacher-completed Renzulli-Hartman Personality scale, and personal nominations. In general, children who qualified had IQs of 129 or better, but not necessarily good school grades. Teachers were cautioned particularly not to nominate --in fact to screen out--nominees who were "overachievers" (i.e., children who succeed by diligent effort--by grinding it out.)[13]

Children accepted for REACH spend one full day a week in the special class and four days in their regularly assigned homerooms. The special classes combine grades 4,5, and 6. Some schools fill a whole class from their own enrollment; others release children (who must find their own transportation) to go to nearby schools in order to fill a REACH classroom. In a typical day, they might run through a program that includes logic problems to teach inductive and deductive reasoning, math brain teasers, research skills, critical thinking, and creative problem solving. These processes are crucial, content secondary. This year's unifying theme is Medieval Life, a topic chosen, according to one district official, because that subject matter is not touched upon in the regular elementary curriculum and thus will not infringe on anyone's curricular territory. Some attention will be given to the affective domain, program officials report, but one dare not touch on questions of values--e.g., philosophy texts ordered for this program had to be discarded last year when some parents protested against them.

The justification for this program, after parent demand, is that bright children need to interact with their peers, so that they may develop skill in discussion, and to spend time alone thinking and reading, activities which are difficult or impossible to arrange in ordinary classrooms. The charge against which the program must defend itself, of course, is elitism: sorting by IQ seems to violate the district ban on ability grouping. However, if one thinks of thinking as a skill, the district consultants anwer, then REACH students are actually grouped by thinking skill, not ability.

The third enrichment program, in which both Baldy and Duncan among our sample schools are involved, skirts these difficulties. Talents Unlimited requires no addition to staff or materials budgets. Teachers are trained in monthly sessions after school, for which they are compensated by being excused from one In-service day. They merely add two hours each week of Talents Unlimited activities, exercises similar to the ones done in REACH, to their normal course of study and subtract compensating time in other subjects. The grouping-by-ability issue is settled by including all students in the five participating schools. The rationale of the program is that everyone is gifted in some way, and these activities are planned to bring out intuitive, creative, leadership, and planning talents not tapped in ordinary curricula. A district administered evaluation of Talents Unlimited showed significant gains in a sample of children on the Torrance Test of Creative Thinking. No evaluation was made of the effect on teachers. However, at one school where the principal attended Talents Unlimited summer school training, it was indicated to us that she planned to use it to influence teachers to be more creative in their lesson planning. Several teachers expressed, in answer to our inquiry, very great enthusiasm for the program. They use TU activities frequently, as we have observed many times in their classrooms. Several others consider the program mere duplication of things they were already doing and give priority to other activities, most frequently drill on fundamentals, for which they feel parent demand is greater.

## CONCLUDING COMMENT

In Prairie Heights ISD. grouping recipes serve equity by providing for diverse needs in a system that presumes sameness: Resource; multiple textbook adoptions for reading groups of various abilities; and special classes for the handicapped and the gifted. At the same time, grouping reduces uncertainty for teacher and parents. In the independent district and the neighborhood school, it is a way of assuring a limited range in student's social characteristics. Yet the heterogeneous homeroom insures that they will be exposed to democracy too, mingling with bright and average children. And wherever grouping decisions are being made, and recipes applied at the state or district level or in the classroom, whether for academic or social reasons, or merely for administrative convenience, those who define the groups (and those who protest those decisions) do so on these principles: resources must appear to be equally shared; the load must appear to be equally distributed.

In surveying grouping processes, we can see one aspect of what Meyer and Rowan call, "loosely coupled" organizations.[14] At succeeding levels of the organization of education, recipes for action are applied by individuals sharing the same institutional values. Those involved, with the exception of those workers who labor at the boundaries between levels, need not know each other. Texas Education Agency officials specify guidelines based on budgets passed by the Legislature. District administrators apply these guidelines in allocating funds to individual schools. Principals and teachers make specific assignments of pupils within the limits of their allocations. There is no unified policy, no overall plan: each level appears to act on broad principles of reducing uncertainty and promoting equity. And yet, equity has meaning only in a particular context, applied to a particular problem or group visible only at one level. Constrained by previous choices at higher levels and responding to pressures at their own level, each participating group does "what it has to do." Principals distribute to teachers good students and not so good, according to an agreed upon calculus of equity that also prevails when teachers apportion their attention among competing groups of children. As we will find in discussing other issues that affect classroom organization, for instance, classroom management, inspection of teachers, and curriculum, the decision making system is based on consensus and constraints. All the participants want to do what is right. That all participants agree, in general, about what that "right" is, is virtually guaranteed by their shared membership simultaneously in an institutional culture and peer groups that value orderly procedure and fairness. That whatever decisions are made will fall within a narrow range is greatly influenced by the existence of constraints on the authority structure posed by the legitimate demands of state and federal authorities and of parents. This is the context within which the social order of the classroom is constructed.

1. It should be noted, of course, that there is no simple contradiction, just as there is no simple identity, between justice and equity. The need for federal intervention and state guidelines presumably arose because (among other considerations) the needs of some individual children were not being met fairly at lower levels.

2. The small minority population within the district is concentrated in the southeast and south sectors, including Carmine, Adobe, and one other elementary mentioned above. The busing of excess neighborhood children to Adobe and the other school effectively "desegregates" all three schools more so than they would have been naturally. Busing the children to these schools is done because it is economical (the schools are close by). However, the busing policy also manages to maintain relatively intact neighborhood schools because the "ripple effect" of the magnet school is limited to two other elementaries. It should be noted that one other elementary is unique; Comanche Elementary is the repository (in addition to its regular population) for children with severe learning problems regardless of neighborhood. These children qualify for Comanche because they could not be aided, or did not respond to aid at local elementaries.

3. In practice, the mix of pupils in a neighborhood school can be greatly influenced by real estate developers. To the extent that their decisions promote stable neighborhoods, school populations, too, become predicatble.

4. Federal Title I funds, used by many districts to underwrite compensatory education, are not available in Prairie Heights, in accordance with board policy refusing direct federal assistance.

5. In fact, the ARD processes provides an excellent example of a loosely coordinated program where a "logic of confidence" has pervaded (See Meyer and Rowan, 1977, 1978).

6. Moreoever, the fact that poor readers constitute such a large proportion of Adobe's enrollment contributes further to the problem through school policy. It is nearly impossible to schedule children into Resource in the time available, given the lack of coordinated scheduling of academic classes at several grade levels and the principal's policy that Resource time be in addition to, not a substitute for, regular class work. (The principal's justification for this policy is practical: he knows that the classroom teachers, hard pressed by the overwhelming needs of these children, would be tempted to recommend everyone they could for Resource--but he also knows that, realistically, he cannot hope to provide Resource staff to meet the need.) This means that while students in other schools can be scheduled into Resource in such a way as to fully use the Resource teachers' time, at Adobe, Resource teachers are limited to

holding classes during scheduled study halls or TV instruction. To the extent that teachers are willing to allow them to work in their regular classrooms (and teachers vary in their willingness to accept other adults in the classroom), the Resource teachers at Adobe are trying to help meet the need by acting as helping teachers, particularly when slow learning children are grouped together for reading.

7. One such boy, for example, has spent two years in Transition at Baldy. Beginning with intense coaching, he progressed in a year and a half to the point where he could join a regular first grade, though he was still technically in the Transition class. Now able to perform at second grade level, he will return to his home school.

8. Problems of equity and of defining need and entitlement could arise anew with the handicapped, if one case we encountered turns out to be an indicator. Baldy School has enrolled a spina bifida patient, who requires a full-time adult attendant, either her classroom teacher or an aide. To meet this need, the school has had to shift an aide out of Resource. Clearly, any widespread demand for such special treatment would require greatly increased resources, and currently just such pressure for mainstreaming the physically handicapped is coming from parent groups in Prairie Heights.

9. This is true whether the retention decision is in first grade, or in academic departments in Universities. Tenure as time, as seniority, leads to a different set of decisions than that based on merit. The conflict between the two recipes for right to position is not new to education, nor society in general. As early as 1716, Harvard College, a corporation, subjected its tutors to a three year appointment that could be continued only by new election. The rationale is described by Josiah Quincy in his history of Harvard: "The corporation began to perceive the inconvenience (of appointing) very young men without limitation of time, who, if they possessed good talents would speedily be induced to resign and (who) if they did not possess the ability to become eminent in a profession, would be fixed on the college for life." (Quincy, 1840:282 as quoted by Metzger, 1973:117).

10. No teacher has been heard to criticize this policy of heterogeneous grouping within homerooms. On the other hand, no one has defended the policy by citing, as one could, research that shows average and dull students learn more in the presence of bright one. What does keep running through the teachers' discussions of this topic is the feeling that each should have her fair share of the easy to handle, the easy to teach, and, of necessity, the "problems."

11. At the magnet school (Carmine), however, we were told by the new Assistant Principals that heterogeneous grouping was to occur in all subject areas as well as homerooms. Reasoning was two-fold: first they wanted children whose group would be, for example, the "high-lows" to be in class (grouped with) children from a higher group e.g., "high-mediums) and in this was stimulate those below to achieve more, while at the same time not being too "out classed" and thus always failing relative to the other group. This would negatively affect their self-concept. Grouping with a higher group, but one nearer their level, would induce them to work harder and still be able to achieve successes which would enhance

11. both their achievement and self-concepts. The second reason focused on the racial imbalances that were a by-product of straight grouping within the school. When only three groups were present, highs, mediums and lows, volunteer children --those who were drawn to the magnet--turned out to be in the high groups across subject matter. Neighborhood children were in the low groups (not in all cases, but predominantly so). As a result, while homerooms were heterogeneous, subject matter grouping was becoming decidedly not so. While complicately the grouping process did not totally eliminate the racial imbalances, it provides for more balance by spreading-upward and downward the neighborhood children and volunteers Yet, in addition, it preserves the essential recipe of grouping by level, compromising only because of commitment to another procedure, and arrives at a novel *modus vivendi*.

12. In a sense, teaching the low groups is more "challenging" but also "dirtier" work (see Hughes, 1964). Furthermore, it is with the low-normal groups that basic elements of recipes are revealed in much the same way low prestige occupations reveal base elements and concepts that can be applied to the higher prestige occupations (on this point see Hughes, 1958).

13. In the first year, one district official involved in the program noted to us, exactly half those who qualified for admission were girls, but since the program is voluntary, many girls would not join or soon dropped out, fearing to be labeled "bright," and so the program has been predominantly male.

# CHAPTER VII

## TIME AND TIME AGAIN:
## TEMPORAL PATTERNS OF CLASSROOM LIFE

Life in elementary schools is composed of a stream of situations, planned and unplanned, routine and problematic, that occur and recur throughout the school year. Class assignments are made; communications patterns are set up; classrooms are readied for Opening Day--and again for Open House, Thanksgiving, Christmas and spring, the schedule of re-decorating slowing as the year proceeds. Predictable situations are constructed and routines set. Recipes for Classroom Management are made known to students; instruction begins; report cards are issued. Teachers settle classes down with reading time, move into instruction, restore zest with recess, reestablish order after lunch, and try to hold classes in line as the final bell nears. Hourly, daily, yearly, the situational stream of preparation, organization, motivation, completion (punctuated by interuption, disruption, application of recipes for reestablishing the stream) repeats itself, a constant pattern underlying variations among schools, grade levels, and individual classrooms. Though a state curriculum committee will see the school year as a series of teaching units completed and text chapters covered, for those who work in schools, the year is shaped in important ways by Opening Week, Open House, Thanksgiving and Christmas, Easter vacation, and June; the day by announcements, lunch, recess, bus departure, those immediate situations, behavior settings, that require appropriate action.

Situations in elementary schools and classrooms flow fast or slow--not according to the TEA rulebook, not according to the PHISD Teachers' Daily Program, but according to the hour, the day of the week, the season. Metaphorically speaking teachers must sail with the tide, steer between the rocks of bureaucratic demands, negotiate the shoals[1] and see through the mists of individual differences, using recipes that combine management and instruction. En route, the two become practically indistinguishable.

Both education and schooling are concerned with shaping student behavior. The core of education, the teaching/learning process, seeks through gradual changes to shape the learner and achieve a particular result. For the teacher this involves the duality of instruction; that is, both the imparting of knowledge/precept, lessons, and teaching of skills and giving directions, issuing mandates that control the students' experience and making known the apparent rewards and sanctions for keeping to or veering from the prescribed course. It is assumed, however, that in order for teaching/learning to be effective individual differences must be taken into account, not only among pupils but also among teachers since the process is essentially interactive and requires cooperation among all those involved. The professed (and intended) outcome of this process is mastery of the formal curriculum. It is understood that the main responsibility for achievement of the outcomes is with the pupil and that there will accordingly be a range of acceptable results related to student abilities and effort.

In PHISD elementary schools, as in many schools elsewhere, the core process is contexted by schooling as the essential organizational form.

Teachers are limited to a number of arrangements and recipes, and must keep 25 or 30 children quiet, productive, and contained within a very small room for six or more hours per day. The contextual form and its constraints set the stage for the necessity to manage classrooms in particular ways with the desired result of pupil compliance with the arrangements--arrangements that are presumed necessary for establishing a "climate conducive to learning." Primary responsibility for management is the teacher's (although as we will demonstrate later, teachers often attempt to shift this responsibility to pupils). The guiding principle in theory is that all pupils should produce similar behaviors without regard for individual differences; in practice, of course, this is not the case in all or many situations. Classroom management, like instruction, involves an essential duality: the imparting of knowledge, (rule and example) and imperatively mandating compliance with those rules and examples. While management and instruction may start with different theoretical underpinnings, they have very similar processes and in elementary school classrooms often share the same rewards systems.[2] Classroom mangement practice, broadly conceived to include the provisions ("givens") a teacher must work with (such as textbook-based technology, teacher/pupil ratios, grouping guidelines, required minutes, etc.) and recipes for their use form the basis of what has often been called the "hidden curriculum."[3] Both formal and "hidden" curriculum constitute the organized course of study aimed at shaping pupil behavior, at discipline (i.e., at educating and training in a particular course of study and particular habits of order and controlled behavior). It may be analytically possible to separate classroom mangement from instruction in textbooks, but *in situ* it is practically impossible both for teachers and for pupils.

> Each of these major activities are performed according to rather well-defined rules which the students are expected to understand and obey--for example, no loud talking during seatwork, do not interrupt someone else during discussions, keep your eyes on your own paper during tests, raise your hand if you have a question. Even in the early grades these rules are so well understood by the students (if not completely internalized) that the teacher has only to give very abbreviated signals ("Voices, class." "Hands, please.") when violations are perceived. (Jackson, 1968: 8-9)

Teachers are supposed to plan and be prepared for the predictable situations that occur in elementary life; in addition, they must also ( frequently ) improvise when interruptions to the stream occur. While the overall context can be shaped and many events planned and staged, both the interruptions of other events and pupils' definitions of what should be happening must always be handled. The conditional nature of classroom life, its temporal patterning, requires the inseparable operation of instruction and management as virtually one activity. While the two chapters that follow examine more closely the blending of management and instruction, curriculum and hidden curriculum, the focus of this chapter is the temporal pattern of situations, their construction and staging.

## PREPARING FOR OPENING DAY

### Routines: Establishing Who's Here

Preparation for the opening of school begins when principals report to work August 1. They come expecting surprises. For example, two or three of the teachers who signed contracts in April will have resigned in

July. An applicant hired in May will have changed her mind, and the outstanding candidate turned away in June will now have signed on at another school. Building maintenance may have been neglected over the summer. Where one expected stacks of supplies, one finds memos from Purchasing saying the price of such and such items rose 15%; do you still wish to order? These predictable surprises principals, alone on the scene in early August, deal with first.

Then there are the routine chores, revising parent handbooks, scheduling and pupil assignment--routine, and non-problematic, that is, in schools with stable student populations. For example, at Baldy School, assignments, and therefore schedules that depend on class load distribution, are set in May and hold 95% firm in August. If three 4rh grade sections are very large, as they were last year, four 5th grade sections can be planned and minor schedule adjustments made for use of playing fields and music rooms. The few parents who press persistently for their children's assignment to a particular teacher can be accommodated, though normally such matters will have been settled the previous spring. Duncan, with its more mobile population, must hold student assignment flexible until the last week of August. New children are enrolling that week, and 15 to 20 parents of previously enrolled students will request a change of teacher. Each parent conference can take up to 45 minutes, especially when the principal does not honor telephone requests but makes the parent come into the school and discuss the basis for the request. New parents can take even longer as they want to have answers to questions about the school, modes of instruction, teaching philosophy and other open-ended questions. Each change allowed (and, unofficially, most are) necessitates moving another child of the same sex and similar academic ability to make room, and so the class lists remain fluid until the Friday before school starts. "(Then) I put my lists on the window and I will not make any changes after that," Duncan's principal told us.

In contrast, at the school with the least stable student population, (and hence the most uncertainty) Adobe, the principal doesn't hope to have any firm enrollment figures before the second week of school. Therefore, though he writes his lists and schedules in August, as all principals do, this is done with the understanding that everything--even what grade a particular teacher will teach--is tentative. The degree of flux is typified by this year's experience with Adobe's 6th grade classes. Of 29 students assigned to one section in the spring, 13 enrolled in August, together with 16 students new to the neighborhood. Two weeks into the school year, the three 6th grade sections had edged up over 30 each, while 5th grade was losing students. The possibility of a 5th-6th grade combination class was considered during September but ultimately rejected (because such classes are feasible, ironically, only when their membership can be controlled and, above all, held constant for long periods). At last, in December, with 6th grade enrollment at 100 students, district approval came for formation of a fourth section, accompanied, of course, by shakeups in the three existing sections.

In stark contrast, Carmine Elementary School has their enrollment listing 99% complete by the end of the previous school year. When the principal arrives in August there may be some changes in the neighborhood students, but this is very minor.

The volunteer students must sign a contract for the up-coming school year by May. This contract and the enrollment dates are court-ordered and commit the student to attend the school for a year. Neighborhood student enrollment is not so strict, but the majority of enrollment cards for these students are returned before the end of the previous school year. According to the Administrative Assistant, the enrollment is becoming more stable every year. Thus, class assignments, made by the teachers in the spring, are virtually not disturbed when school starts in the Fall.

In a small way, variations at our four study schools illustrate the effects of student mobility. Where there is a high rate of student turnover, what would be routine at an individual school (and settled months in advance) becomes problematic. Standard procedures and recipes give way to discretion and improvision at the level of the individual school. These are situational adjustments designed to modify the operating rules in order to successfully solve the problem.[4] The solution of the problem is designed to bring the school back to original lines of action, but as population instability becomes predictable, what was situational adjustment becomes recipe for action. Different rates of turnover or mobility lead to different patterns at schools, erode the validity of standardized solutions, increase discretion at point of impact, and force individualized response by schools to their "community."[5]

### Activating Communications Lines

Given the hiatus of the summer, August becomes a time for reactivating communication lines. Principals have an eleven month contract while teachers are contracted for ten months. July is a time when only custodians (if there are any for that building) and other maintenance people roam the halls. (Sometimes during July repairs are done to the building; other times, they are supposed to be done, but do not occur.) Thus, August brings an elaborate course of meetings for PHISD principals and teachers. Elementary and secondary principals meet as a group; 37 elementary principals meet separately; groups of 8 or so elementary principals from the feeder schools for each of PHISD's four high schools conduct their area meetings. Principals must accompany their new teachers to the Chamber of Commerce sponsored luncheon. Normally isolated from each other at scattered work sites, principals come together monthly, and more frequently in August, as they prepare for Opening Day. As a staff they receive instructions from the Superintendent and his deputies: updated enrollment projections and staff allotments; guidelines for handling report cards, curriculum changes, student teachers and grouping, use of clerical help, and consultants--all matters that are supposed to be standardized throughout the district. Informally, as a group of colleagues and more formally at Area meetings, these principals share gripes and recipes for solutions to everyday problems:

> I may have a question about "What do you do with your students in the morning"? from other principals and maybe it will help me and I'll say "my cafeteria is causing me a lot of trouble, what do you do to keep them quiet, move the kids through the line and keep the floor picked up"? and each person will tell and then sometimes at the end we just have a sharing session and somebody will say "This is something really neat I'm doing at my school, let me tell you about it and if you want to do it fine, if you don't, fine." Because we are all over these little buildings and we don't have time to talk to each other.

In August, too, principals prepare written guidelines for their staffs, excerpts from the larger Elementary School Handbook prepared by the district and supplemented by suggestions for attention to matters of particular concern to each principal--frequently, faculty teamwork and communication with parents. Principals write information sheets for parents, including directions for dropping off and picking up children at school entrances, immunization reminders, hours and telephone numbers, school calendar, prices of school supplies, cafeteria prices, and a note of welcome. Organizing their PTA leadership team for the year, principals meet with the incoming President, Treasurer, Membership Chairman, Hospitality Chairman, Cultural Arts Chairman. By all these arrangements, prepared with care in advance, principals reestablish the links they will need with colleagues and put themselves in a position to direct communications between the school and outsiders.

For teachers, one week of meetings precedes the opening of school. The Superintendent, who will perhaps not be seen again all year by teachers, establishes his presence by a speech; the Chamber of Commerce shows its support by hosting a luncheon for all new teachers and their principals; principals call their faculties together to pass along the guidelines they've received as well as the schedules they've worked out for morning duty, 4th, 5th, and 6th grade music, and physical education; teachers on each grade level meet with the principal to establish a pattern for weekly meetings, which the principal may attend but rarely does. During this week, too, links are set up between classroom teachers and the consultants, district employees with expertise in primary or intermediate methods, who disseminate new techniques, find special teaching materials, or, on teacher request, even help organize classrooms for various kinds of instruction.

Finally, a great deal of time is devoted during this "last week of summer"[6] to fostering good relations with parents. Parents of entering kindergartners throughout the district are invited to Open House in their children's classrooms. In some schools the PTA gives a luncheon which teachers will attend. First grade teachers plan to call on or talk with every parent the first week of school. Principals spend many hours that week greeting parents who arrive to register their children. One principal told us she talks frequently even with prospective home buyers in her school's attendance zone when new custom-homes are being developed. The quality of a school is seen as crucial to the maintenance of neighborhood standards, and as residential real estate sales peak in August, the principal's role as representative of the school system to the public becomes most visible.

## Recipes for Looking Good

"If you're happy and you know it, stomp your feet..." It's not enough just to be good--you've got to let people know about it. One principal reminded her staff, "People judge the quality of a faculty by the appearance of the school." Principals can do little about the public areas of a school, the cafeteria, the corridors, beyond pressing demands for fresh paint and possibly hanging a few small pictures. (Even a mural 12 feet long on 4 foot butcher paper is a small picture in a corridor 50 yards long.) The halls of a traditional, enclosed classroom school consist of unadorned asphalt tile, concrete block, or slick plastic paneling. But open the door of a classroom: braided rug, a rocking chair for reading, giant lounging pillows, floor-to-ceiling wall displays, The Solar System in shining blue and gold, Rocket to the Moon, I Lost a Tooth (grade 1); dinette complete with checkered tablecloth for small group work, fragrant candles, flourishing ferns and spider plants suspended from fluorescent ceilings (grade 6). Teachers make the school appear as schools ought to appear; they soften on the surface its institutional qualities and thereby add to the credibility of the school through their individual and collective front (see Goffman, 1959). It is important that the school appear to parents as the kind of place where they want their children, perhaps, as important as the actual demeanor of the teachers.

For teachers, the biggest job in getting ready for a new year, and the most important after planning and procuring teaching materials, is decorating the classroom.[7] With enormous effort, they oppose hard floors, functional desks and indestructable walls, the institutional givens, with warm, lively, personal decor. By this effort teachers show the importance for them of establishing personal, in addition to pedagogical, relationships with their kids. One teacher, for instance, displayed next to her desk the first week of school an array of color snapshots of all her students. She had taken all 29 children out to the playground the second day of school and snapped them on the jungle gym. One of her students told us about his reaction to this teacher's work: "(When I first saw this room) I thought this isn't like any other room I've ever seen. I had a good feeling. None of my other teachers thought of doing this." His teacher described what she had done to create this effect in her overcrowded,[8] windowless classroom:

> Reseacher: How do you do it? You walk in a week before school, and what have you got?
>
> Teacher: You've got a pen and a pencil and a grade book and a lesson plan book and you get poster board and you get the paper that goes behind the bulletin board. Other than that, it's entirely up to the teacher. The way I got some things for the classroom was I went around to grocery stores, drug stores, friends--this table came from a friend that was fixing to give it away and the chairs. The Scripto Company donated about 4 cases of pencils for the kids. These displays like the baskets, these daisies hanging, that Ziggy game center, all the Ziggies hanging up... they all came from grocery stores or drug stores that were willing to give them up. Of course, you don't walk in and get them; you walk in and they take your name down and you have to go back. Now you can change any arrangement like that (a rack for reading folders). It was at a store and it had displays already in it, it was full of gift wrapping paper, and I literally talked the manager out of it and helped him restock some shelves to get all the wrapping paper out of that and he even loaded it in the car for me after that. Odds and ends just come from everywhere--friends--that bookshelf right there, that chair is something I've had for a long time and I brought it up here (big recliner). I was going to use that sewing machine but with my class, it was a little too much. So that's how it comes, it comes from scrounging around.

The student who said none of his other teachers had done this didn't mean his other teachers had neglected decoration. Teachers are required to produce bulletin boards, and all but the incorrigably monastical do far more. His point was that teachers' classrooms are as different as their living rooms. This one is homey; another (much copied in its own and even other schools in the district) is an imaginative and as professionally produced as a Neiman Marcus show window; a third is arranged to make space for a puppet theater; still another is aligned for optimal sight lines to the chalk board. In the last week of August, within organizational constraints, teachers create the setting within which their personal styles of management and instruction and preferred relationships to students will unfold through the year. A perceptive student can see at a glance on Opening Day how it's going to be.[9]

There is a variation on this pattern in one of our sample schools where some of the classrooms are open and most others semi-closed. Here too, of course, the first concern is to create an inviting appearance for Opening Day. And in fact, here (where in some areas there is a virtual absence of corridors) one never feels the institutional chill of traditional schools. But with rooms open to comparison, teachers team in decoration as they do in lesson planning. In this school there is conscious team effort to ensure that all rooms project a planned and professional look that signals competence to parents. Even teachers who acquire one of the coveted closed rooms in this building share the team spirit as this one does:

> We start about 2 to 3 weeks early. This year I painted my room. We tried for 2 years to get it painted and they wouldn't...and it was three different colors. and all three clashed...Even people would walk in and.. well, it was just terrible. So I painted the walls first. It took me two days. But all the first grade teachers come up here and we get our bulletin boards put up and we also coordinate. We have basically the same things because we try very strongly to put up a very unified front. We team together. We want the parents to think on the first day...we don't want them to run in here and say, "Oh, so and so has a sewing center or something like that, and you don't have it"... So we try to make sure the parents, you know, leave us alone and we have exactly the same thing so we work together and stay very coordinated.

## Planning and Scheduling Situations

Unless your field trips are scheduled, your films ordered, books in place, and worksheets duplicated before Teacher Inservice in August, you're going to be in trouble all year, teachers agree. So, knowing that Inservice week will be clogged with meetings, experienced teachers meet on grade levels during the summer to block out schedules for the year, to make initial attempts to construct the stream of situations and make it predictable. One 1st grade teacher described her group planning this way:

Teacher: Before school starts, even before Inservice, we order all of our sheets that go along with the Houghton Mifflin Reading Series, because they have to be ordered, they have to be filed, and that takes almost one day, just to get them filed, because each unit has three sheets that go along with it and we've got something like 90 units. If you don't plan ahead, you can only order like 10 at a time, which, 10 sheets would be about 3 days' work, every three days you're having to order more sheets. Sometimes you'd get them back in a week and sometimes it's two weeks, so if you don't plan ahead and do it in the summer, then it's really a headache all through the year. We also do the long range planning--we plan our field trips. If you'll call about your field trips before Inservice starts, you can get in when you want it; if you wait till even Inservice , all the other teachers call in and the year before last, we didn't even get to go to the Heard museum, cause we waited a week later. So we do all of our long range planning. We set up our units that we're going to study, and set approximate weeks, and we don't do the detailed studies, but we know that in January we're probably going to study Space, so we plan our field trip to the Planetarium.

Researcher: You've blocked it out so that all the things that require preplanning can be in place by the time you arrive here for that Inservice week.

Teacher: Right, this is our grid. This just more or less has unit topics with about how many weeks: Matter, Animals--we're going to the zoo this day--Texas,

> Space...This is flexible. We can change it, but we wrote down our list. We also ordered our filmstrips. so that they would get here at the (right) time. You know, when you're doing the day-to-day planning, by the time you plan for the next day, pull out all the sheets, finish grading the day's work, you really don't have time then to sit down and start looking for film strips. So we just take the summer--of course, we're not getting paid for this, but it just takes lots of hours. We get all that done and it makes it so much easier when we're busy in the year.

At 6th grade, with seven solid subjects, and seven solid textbooks for each student, just physically hauling all the needed materials into the classroom can be a major task. Fortunately, students at this age are strong enough to help and eager to get a look at their new teachers. When Inservice week begins, one 6th grade teacher told us:

> The books are already here, but you have to get them all out and make sure you have enough for however many they tell you you're fixing to have the first day... Now I had several kids that just kept seeing me come up to the school that I'd never met that, like, Darrell and Gordon stayed up here a week helping me and I didn't even know them, they were two 6th graders. So some of the students got all the books out and got all the book numbers down and got all the book numbers on the books.

In 6th grade, too, because of heavy preparation requirements for so many subjects, teachers usually prefer to departmentalize. (This means, typically, that one teacher will teach math to all 6th grade homerooms, another will teach reading, a third science or social studies.) This arrangement requires coordination of schedules but frees these teachers to some extent from the need to coordinate all their units of study before school opens.

By Inservice week, then, experienced teachers have blocked out major areas of the school year, scheduled use of instructional resources and supplies. Given that teachers want to appear competent and seriously desire the best for their students, the tacitly approved recipe for action is to show up early, during the summer months when one is not paid, and make the necessary arrangements. If you don't follow this recipe, your charges will not go on fieldtrips, the filmstrips (if you can get them) will not match the units of study, and you'll be stuck ordering supplies as well as grading papers and making up new work problems in the evening. Under the weight of the alternative of reacting to problems, a pragmatic course of action becomes cutting the corners.

## The First Day of School

During Inservice week, the task of preparing for the imminent opening of schools throws teachers, pupils, custodians, principals together in office, workrooms, and cooridors, as they check plans, fetch supplies, and get acquainted again. On Opening Day, however, backstage preparations end, and as if the stage manager were yelling "Places," everyone takes his appointed station. Classroom doors have closed on teachers and students. Henceforth custodians will enter during school hours only with apologies. Principals are in their offices or handling external relations with the PTA. Thus, one principal describes that first Monday:

> Principal: When the children all come the first day and it's all hectic, everybody is excited about coming to school and they are all finding their teachers and then at 8:20 everybody goes to their classroom and the teacher closes the door and it's nice and quiet.
>
> Researcher: That's it!
>
> Principal: It really is... that's what gets you through that week (Inservice), you know, because you know that everything is going to fall into

> place on Monday morning and then of course, we have a PTA coffee in the cafeteria when they invite all the parents to come in and have coffee and meet the principal and meet the PTA officers, we all have to go to that, that's the first day.

In fact, this principal's building has few classrooms with doors; nevertheless, an Opening Day, figuratively speaking, the doors close.

Inside the classrooms that day, teachers are setting up recipes, clusters of rules for work for the year. In the first grade, this will be the number one order of business until after Christmas; in sixth grade, it will still take six weeks. Partly, the length of this process is due to the summer interruption of routine. A second cause is that the system allows each teacher to establish, within custom-prescribed limits, her own standards of and recipes for acceptable classroom behavior. Thirdly, classroom groups are reconstituted by necessity and by design every year. No matter how long a child has been in one school, he will never have experienced just the group he joins on Opening Day nor the particular cluster of rules associated with the classroom. Entering a new classroom, children say, they check out their classmates first and then the teacher. No students commented to us on classroom arrangements, but the fundamental order of the classroom in instantly visible: there are 26 or 28 or 30 small chairs, however clustered, and one big one. How these two sets will interact must now be determined.

It is somewhat of an overstatement to say that classroom order must be built anew each year since there are rules that overlap from room to room and year to year. These can be viewed as broader organizational rules that are part of a more or less defined institutional rules structure. They cover the place of students and teachers, the amount of movement allowable within classroom and in the halls, the manner of dress and loudness of voice, and the general cultural conduct norms applied to children. Such norms are established early, often times prior to schooling, and are reinforced by schools as the children move through the grade structure. Yet, while adults may take-for-granted such rules, children appear to test them out *in situ*, over and over again. The classroom context must be established as one which supports prior rules and builds upon them. Here too, though, teachers have their own preferences for these rules. Some tolerate movement within the class while others find it a cardinal sin; some tolerate a cacophony, others demand silence. In addition, the "mix" of students is new and they establish their own cliques, circles, and hierarchies. In these senses, then, one can say that classroom order must be built anew by each teacher for each new group.

## FRONTING TO PARENTS

### Open House

Critical times in relations between school and parents occur at the start of the year when new students enter and when decisions are made, typically in the spring, about placement of individual children. As we have seen, the principal takes charge on these occasions. When, during the year, the school is open to parents for formal visits, the principal calls upon the whole staff to sparkle. One teacher, who delighted third graders at Open House by appearing in lucite sandals with lights twinkling in the heels, merely flashed what others show in quiet ways.

Without any obvious fixing up, every room is at its best. Opening Day displays have been replaced, for October Open House, with pumpkins and goblins; seatwork is neatly stacked on every desk; and every child is represented by a special art project--in one especially striking display a life size self portrait in crayon taped to each little chair. Teachers create a particular stage for the parent audience. At Baldy and Duncan surrounding streets are clogged with parents'cars, and Adobe, too, has a good turnout: PTA ladies selling cakes and T-shirts, parents in fashions from blue jeans to expensive suits--"They're all so young," a counselor remarks, and it's true. The halls are full of milling, moving people with staff on the alert to help any parent who looks lost. The noise makes general conversation unintelligible; yet much is being done. Parents are renewing old acquaintances that are forged by the bond of the schools. Their children know each other and they are bound into a web of affiliation. Teachers meet new parents and vice versa. Some teachers are especially eager to meet one or another student's parents because of some exceptional or special characteristics of the children, or sometimes the parent. The principal moves about saying hello to anyone who might recognize her/him, visiting classrooms and talking with parents. For many parents this is the only time they will come into the school and impressions must be properly made. The first grade's little desks glitter with neat and colorful work piled high. The rooms have pillows for reading and conversation, things to climb up and down on while learning. It appears as a fun place to be, and parents comment to themselves about this. The teachers and, in some cases, the aide, are exuberant and flash toothy smiles at all who approach. Sign-up sheets adorn the teacher's desk for parents who wish conferences. Teachers attempt to dodge lengthy discussions of children's problems during open house and use this time to make appointments with parents to discuss, at a later date, matters in private. In the higher grades, there is less glitter and color, the desks and space appears more instrumental but still some remnants of fun remain. Interspaced with the lockers and the blonde formica desk tops are works of students, art projects. Each grade room empties on schedule as prearranged programs occur in the cafetorium or auditorium, and parents are drawn to watch an emerging synchronicity of child movement. Each section of the program is a little more complicated and better performed as the children get older, but each is given to an audience of parents, anyway, who rarely stay to see the program beyond their child's grade level. Virtually all the children are proud to show their school and eager to introduce their teachers to Mom and Dad. Principals smile greetings in the front hall. Babies in strollers get a preview of what's to come, and it looks good.

## What Parents are Told

What information is provided to parents by the school and teachers? This question allows us to focus on the discrete types of information from "progress reports," that ironically report lack of adequate progress, to newsletters. Content analysis of such documents often sheds light on the thought patterns involved. In the case of the following quote from Duncan School's newsletter, one can see the front work of legitimizing a silent reading program to parents:

> We will continue our individual reading program--Duncan Really Reads. The children and the teachers read from 8:20 - 8:40 a.m. material of their choice. Research indicates that this contributes to better reading scores. In addition, we feel it is so important that children read for enjoyment, we have included time for it in our school day.
>
> Duncan School Newsletter, 9/79

There are two salient points made concerning the program: it raises scores and thus objectively, in terms of output measures, students appear to be doing better, and secondly, it raises the level of reading for enjoyment. The latter point, of course, may be the most important one since reading for enjoyment is what most people do rather than reading to score higher on a test; yet, it is presumed that parents will be more responsive to the program if it shows "objective" results. One should note, of course, that "reading test scores" refer only to students; the teachers do not take such tests. Why then do they read? Presumably they read to demonstrate exemplary conduct; that is, when they read. For there is tremendous variability in behavior across classrooms. A few teachers simply use the time to catch up on paperwork; others have a steady stream of children with minor problems approaching them desiring instant solutions; teachers confer with each other about their own problems in the halls. Some actually read. Similar ranges of behavior can be observed in the children. Generally, any quiet behavior that does not entail a great deal of movement qualifies as "really Reading." Children can clean up work tables, work on school work, or even read (not comics, of course,but library books).

Secondly, one should note that the parents are not told that the reading period is a management control device that quiets the school down and establishes (more or less) a serious climate in the first twenty minutes.

Perhaps, it is because telling parents about specific behavior control mechanisms is not "appropriate". Parents may be given broad statements about behavior control, but the specific means by which such control is accomplished is the purview of the teachers and principals.

The example below comes from a faculty meeting and concerns the "Discipline Policy at Baldy". The Principal drafted a statement to be given to the PTA concerning the policy at Baldy and she handed these out to the faculty:

> Discipline
>
> We utilize a type of discipline that will hopefully develop responsibility in the students here at Baldy. This approach is founded in the works of Dr. William Glasser, author of Schools Without Failure and Reality Therapy, director of the Educator Training Center in Los Angeles, and consulting psychiatrist to the Los Angeles City and Palo Alto schools. Teachers are asked to handle minor disciplinary problems within their own classrooms. Whenever a student becomes a consistent disruptive problem or exhibits some unusual inappropriate behavior, the teacher will send that person to the office. Once a student has been sent to the principal's office, then we talk together about the behavior, eliminating discussion of excuses. We talk about trying to avoid such behavior in the future. At this time, usually a detention is assigned. Whenever a student has been sent to the office several times or has exhibited extremely inappropriate behavior, then an in-house suspension is assigned. The student is isolated from his or her class for a day or days, but is responsible for the regular classroom work. The philosophy includes the realization that more than a detention is needed to help students having such discipline problems. When rules and sanctions have been established, then natural consequences occur. The students have to understand that they are responsible for themselves. PHISD policy does permit the use of corporal punishment as a last resort, and that is the way it will be utilized here. I am optimistic that this approach to discipline will help a student face responsibility and not excuse himself for his behavior. By doing so, he builds a successful self-image.

In meeting with the faculty, the principal noted that operationalization of the concepts was the teachers' responsibility. That is, there are some very broad outlines, but the definitions of appropriateness can vary from class to class just as the sanctions available for similar infractions. Rules that are posted in some classrooms attest to a more or less common reality concerning what students should be doing in terms of respecting authority and each other, but the life blood given to this "working consensus" is through definition and action on the part of individual teachers.[10] What is fronted to the parents is the idea of administrative unity: the school has a policy. While this is true, the working of the policy is virtually voluntary and quite particularistic--adaptable to each of the classrooms and the order that is negotiated and ongoing there. In this way, parents are placated and formal appearances maintained.

## CEREMONIAL OCCASIONS

> The effective teacher makes special plans for those days preceding holidays, close of school, or special events which upset the normal routine for students.
>
> --PHISD Manual, Teacher Planning Rule 22

> "Twas the day before Christmas (vacation), and all through
>   the schools
> The pupils were flipping our nerves and our rules..."
>
> --Adobe teacher, Christmas, 1979

In the first 4 months of school occur Labor Day, State Fair Day, Halloween, Thanksgiving and Christmas Holidays. Excepting Labor Day, which is given only formal recognition in Texas, each of these days is preceded by stories, games, and art projects that build excitement. And after each of these breaks, to a smaller or larger degree, ordinary classroom routines must be restored.

On the day after the 1979 State Fair opened on fair grounds 15 miles south of Prairie Heights, two Vietnamese children, so newly arrived in the United States that they were still wearing babyish playsuits instead of jeans, enrolled in a 1st grade class at Adobe. They carried their school supplies in big plastic bags from the State Fair auto show. Thus, without speaking English at all, they entered the classroom conversation: all the children were talking about State Fair, Big Tex, the Midway, though quite a few had never traveled the 15 miles and seen these wonders themselves.

In school, along with the words to "My Country, 'Tis of Thee," kids learn to celebrate holidays. They even celebrate holidays virtually ignored beyond the classroom windows, where passersby may see construction paper cutouts of Washington's cherry tree axe, fold-cut Valentine's lace, Lincoln's stove-pipe hat or red paper carpets showing the way to the library in celebration of National Library Week. February, of all school months the dullest, needs holidays.

Holidays have multiple uses. They provide themes for bulletin boards, art projects, library units, skits, field trips, and instructional content. Holidays bring students and teachers together: within the classroom, competition is suspended as students trim their Christmas trees and directed outward by the whole group as each class works to outdo the others in spectacular door decoration. Holidays bring age groups together: kindergartners shyly parade their Halloween costumes through a 6th grade class and the older children applaud. Holidays bring breaks in schedule. "Last week we hardly had school," a 6th grade teacher remarked, hyperbolically, in December, "On Thursday the 6th grade choir sang at a bank, and on Friday the 6th grade all went ice skating." The next week the principal treated the whole school to a Walt Disney feature film that ran the whole morning. The school district buys a dozen special Christmas films to transmit to each classroom via TV hookup. Teachers, not all of whom are enthusiastic users of classroom TV, turn their sets on. The holidays provide unstressful links between school and home. Homeroom mothers plan classroom parties for Christmas and Valentine's Day, and family refrigerators throughout the district are festooned those nights with the leftover party decorations.

These occasions (including teacher and student birthdays) allow for the organization of the class around broad cultural values and serve to reproduce, at least, the ceremonial aspects of the values. Yet, from the peak of Christmas excitement, and to a lesser extent after all holidays, even weekends, the reaction is a need for and a comforting return to routine. One third grader expressed his concern after New Year's: "I'm sort of scared to go back to school today--I might forget what I'm supposed to do." But a 6th grader showed relief: "We're finally going to have science today; it's been a long time." Finally, after New Year's, routines are firmly established, even for 1st grade, reading groups will change little, friendships have formed, and there follows a long productive period interrupted only by Easter and lasting into May. But as the May - June days grow hot and hotter, the constant drone of air conditioners soporific, attention flags.

## MAYTIME: CLOSING ROUTINES

During the last month of school, plans are made tentatively for the year to follow, end-of-the-year housekeeping chores are accomplished, and kids, especially 6th grade kids, celebrate. Schedules become perceptibly looser, instruction is less emphasized, less homework assigned as children are encouraged to get their written work in order and up to date. Efforts to involve parents in both the fun and the serious decision-making increase.

On May 1, new appointments to administrative posts are announced. Teachers who plan to return will have signed contracts, and principals will be hiring replacements for those who resign. Principals tentatively assign teachers to grade levels. Tentative lists of students in various homeroom sections are compiled (a process examined in detail in Chapter VI).

The more complicated process of scheduling 6th graders into their junior high school classes is undertaken in May by a joint effort of elementary and secondary counselors. The recipe for handling this transition is as follows:

> First, the junior high counselor sends enrollment forms to the elementary school, and the students tentatively select their class schedules for next year. Next, the junior high counselor spends a day a the school, during which parents are invited to talk with him and with the sixth grade teachers during school hours, in the auditorium. The students, too, are present, of course, and at this time firm schedules are decided upon. During May, the elementary school counselor conducts three training sessions for the 6th graders: (1) She works with them on self evaluation, introducing them to systematic ways of gauging the interest and strengths. (2) She demonstrates and lectures on the kinds of study skills that will be needed in junior high. (3) She asks them to imagine themselves 20 years in the future, to think about what they want to be doing then, and to think about what this will require them to plan now.
>
> Finally, the junior high counselor brings with him to 12 junior high school students, not all of them super achievers, who go in groups of 4 to the 3 sixth

grade classes and conduct question and answer sessions without any adults being present. Adults have heard, though, that very frequent topics are which courses are hard and easy; which teachers are good or bad.

Among teacher's year-end housekeeping chores is bringing students' cumulative records up to date. Teachers check to see that the files include academic grades, results of standardized tests a list of reading texts completed, and current photographs. Following, apparently, from passage of the Freedom of Information Act, teachers are asked to remove from the files IQ scores and personal comments by teachers as well as old test booklets and other obsolete information as designated for each school by the principal. Other vital trivia that consume teachers' time in May are surveys of broken furniture and equipment and the counting of books. Every state supplied text book must be accounted for. The extraordinarily dreary details of this procedure were discussed at one May faculty meeting as follows:

Principal: (In response to question, Can we start checking in books now?) No, it's too early to put them on the stage. The band still has to use it. (In response to suggestion that they be kept in one classroom for each grade level.) No, Linus has to have those rooms clear for cleaning. (Gym suggested.) No, Linus has to clean that too.

Teacher: (Who has been at Baldy since 1964.) All those books won't go on the stage, and we need the light in the gym. We ring the walls with books and work in toward the center of the gym, a good way.

Principal: That will just have to override the need to clean the gym. We'll put the books in the gym.

## DAILY RHYTHMS

Within the yearly pattern of organization, management, instruction, completion, there flows a daily pattern repeating these themes. Teachers arrive early to prepare for the day's work, conduct opening ceremonies, formal or informal, begin instruction in solid subjects, break for recess, return to manage and instruct, take the kids to lunch, watch them scramble on the play equipment for half an hour, pull them back to class and attempt to capture their attention again with some lively activities, and finally, when attention flags, hang on, keep instructions simple and specific, deal with individual needs, wait for the bell.

State regulations impose weekly minimum times for all subjects. Principals schedule classes that require shared facilities and special teachers, the so called "special area classes," music, P.E., and, at Carmine only, Spanish and art. In the time not scheduled by principals, teachers try to put their academic subjects in prime learning time: midmorning and early afternoon. For they know a gym class scheduled for 8:30 a.m. is flat, and a reading class at 3:00 would drag unbearably--if it could be conducted at all. Viewing classroom behavior across study schools there is an understanding amongst PHISD elementaries that solid classes belong in the middle of the day, bracketed by individual and elective activities early and late. Deviations from this "conventional order" are virtually always toward the morning hours: core subjects in the morning and midday, electives inthe afternoon.

Basic rhythms can be maintained because time has been allowed outside the core for morning settling down and end of the day exhaustion.

Old timers might be surprised to learn that these schools do not even have tardy bells. (Perhaps this is because so many kids are now bused or driven to school by their parents - which makes tardiness an adult problem to be handled by diplomacy, not detention.)

As the children arrive over a 20 minute time span, school days begin with individual activities. In three schools, principals, teachers, and students begin the day with 20 minutes of silent reading, well, most days. At Adobe, study hall is scheduled for 6th grade, while 1st graders pick up color sheets as they arrive over a 20 minute span and complete them quietly at their seats. Only after 9:00 do opening ceremonies occur, some activity to bring the group together and signal the start of scheduled tasks. A few teachers maintain the tradition of flag salute and Pledge of Allegiance. Many focus the group for a short general discussion of school and classroom events. First grade teachers regularly have the children describe the day's weather, note the change on the calendar, recognize birthdays and lost baby teeth, before they break into groups for serious business, reading. At 6th grade, some teachers like to stimulate adult level discussion, leading the conversation toward national news if they can. Whatever the format teachers choose, the first 30 minutes of school establish an atmosphere of purposeful serious, unpressured work. This accomplished, instruction begins. In first grade the academic subject is reading, which is given most of the morning in all schools. Math comes next, just before a late lunch at Baldy, just after lunch in the other schools, where 1st graders eat first. What's left, stories, music, very basic science and social studies, art, library, guidance, fills the rest of the afternoon.[11]

The rhythm of activity quickens strikingly as the day lengthens and children's attention spans grow shorter. Except for a half hour recess at midmorning, first graders remain in their rooms until lunch time, reading the entire time, moving infrequently and systematically. They join the teacher by small groups for their daily instruction and seatwork assignments; they return to their seats and work individually; and when their assignments are done, they move to designated "centers" (small areas within the room) for enrichment activities. In contrast, afternoons tend to be frantic as is illustrated by the following observations of a first grade:

1:00 We all clean up desks, line up, and proceed to the west lawn for a birthday celebration. Some of the children object to sitting on the grass and/or in the sun, so it takes a long time to get seated and we never really make it into a circle as the teacher would like. Rickey and the teacher get cupcakes and napkins to everyone eventually. We all clean up, line up, get quiet for entering the building--and are back in the room at 1:10.

1:10 All the children are seated at their desks for spelling.

1:20 Spelling ends. Row helpers collect all the papers. Eight chairs are placed in front of the desk area, and all the children seat themselves on them or in front of them on the floor.

1:25 The teacher begins grouping the children for a miscellaneous activity period. Three children who did not complete their three reading sheets this morning is assigned to finish them now. The teacher picks several children each from her green blue, and yellow groups and assigns them to go to their seats and look through magazines for pictures of various foods. They are to cut these pictures out and make scrapbooks. The remaining children are instructed to play the button game, for which the teacher provides a bucket of buttons.

1:30 Most people have begun the assigned activities.

1:40 The teacher announces that it is time for Recess--but first the room must be put in order. The buttons are gathered and put away. Eight chairs at the front stacked in a corner. Paste bottles capped. Magazines stashed at the back of the room. Papers picked up form the floor. Children line up at the door. Proceed silently through the hall to the playground.

1:45 Playground. All three sections of children are here with two teachers as per district policy. (One teacher on break)

1:55 Line up by class for return to classroom.

2:00 Line up by the bathroom and take care of that necessity.

2:05 Line up and proceed to Miss Kerr's room for story time.

2:15 Line up and proceed to Library, where Mrs. Richards tells a story.

2:35 Return to classroom 5 minutes ahead of schedule. Mrs. Richards says she's late some days, so it all comes out even in the end.

2:40 Back in the classroom and everyone assembled onthe rug at the front of the room. The teacher tells the children they will soon be taking - field trip. She then lines the children up and pins a trip permission slip on each child.

2:45 Line up to leave for the day.

Sixth grades run a longer and more complicated version of the prime time pattern. The solid subjects that 6th grade teachers specialize in, always reading and math, sometimes science, social studies, or language, are scheduled in big blocks in the morning and early afternoon. These are the subjects that matter. With the afternoon time left for academics (after PE and music have been scheduled), lesser subjects such as spelling and art are fitted in. As one teacher explained the system to us:

> We are each teaching our strength in the morning and have that in a pretty regimented...we really try to hold onto that and if something goes, its hopefully not that. We try to make time for that everyday because I feel like having a morning, stable, set, we were here yesterday and we are going to be here today and tomorrow we'll come back in here...you know, it will continue, and I think that's really good. And then I also like the little flexibility that we have in the afternoons because that's when a lot of your programs come and that's when choir and a lot of the extras like band is....and I like having the flexibility if, like today, we figure is going to be the last pretty day we are going to have for a while and we went outside for a few extra minutes that they really badly needed....well, I really like having that flexibility and you don't really feel like the kids are getting short changed in it. I think it's neat to have a very structured time and then the flexible...if somebody's got something, like I've got this record of the whale sounds that I want to do one day with them and that we can pull that together and (the other sixth grade teachers) will be glad to go along with that, you know,

very able and experienced and - essential - the student group is stable and well disciplined.

Researcher: Something you said one day has bearing here and that is that you do try to provide a lot of variety and freedom for the children.

Teacher: Yeah, that's right. And, you win yourself...you win yourself the time for doing your work by having a good Art program and by having recess and letting them really run and play hard, you know, get out there and throw that football and if you haven't got anything just real neat on TV well stay out, let them be out 40 minutes and paly just as hard as they can because when they come back in then they, like we sometimes have maybe every third Friday--it never works out the same but just sometime we'll go out right after lunch on Friday--because that is a tired day and its like we had given them a million dollars. But, that buys you good behavior next week, that kind of reward. But a lot of people don't realize that, but its like, you know...change activities often and change the schedule and all get together and see a movie and just change it around so that every day you don't sit down, open your book, and do the questions at the end of the chapter.

Where the student group is always shifting and the need to cover fundamentals thoroughly is intense, there is no such leeway. At Adobe, 6th grade has no scheduled recess. They run a course of basics from 9:15 to 2:25, preceded by study hall and followed by PE/music. Carmine has a shorter day than other schools because their intermediate students have the same bus schedule as primary grades. And in that shorter time they must fit two special classes other schools don't offer, formal art training and Spanish. They cope with these exigencies by cutting lunch to 20 minutes and running solids right up to bus departure time.

Teachers feel less comfortable about the end of the day, than the beginning if we can judge from their comments. One 6th grade teacher, for instance, said, "The children are pretty well spent by 1:00, if the truth be known. If you had them till -1:00 every day, that would be enough." A 5th grade teacher would go a little longer, but feels "the last half hour of school is just a waste, we just have study hall and wait." Study hall after 3:00 is rather different from its tranquil counterpart in the morning. This 6th grade is not typical, but on the contrary, extraordinarily well disciplined:

> The final minutes of the day are devoted to finishing up the art project, cleanup, study hall. Noise level rises steadily during this time. Ray (a student) pulls down a movie screen and starts clowing behind it. When called to task by the teacher, he and his buddy Bill turn on the overhead, on which are displayed some "extra practice" math problems, beam them at the screen, and start working on them. Now for the first time ever, I hear the teacher call for silence. She asks a student to shove a rolling bookcase into the opening between her room and another. Since some kids are still cleaning up after art, need water which is not available in her section but is in the other room, there develops a little comedy of rolling the bookcase aside and then back, aside and then back--the thing is 6'ft. high and 3'ft. thick, loading with sets of encyclopedias. The teacher has to remind the Art Assistants to do their job of stacking paper at the back of the room. Clusters of 2 and 3 kids all over are talking quietly. The teacher is not bothered and doesn't try to enforce the silence rule. She and several students move back and forth between the classroom and the library next door. Five minutes before the end of school she says to the class, "I get to leave when you do, -so I want you to move fast." Now she prods her classroom duty officers. "Jack, I need you to check the floor." Chairs on desks, pick up under desks. A student gives each class member a copy of a ditto announcement asking parents to send $1.00 by Friday to cover the cost of Xmas and Valentine's parties. At 3:30, all is neat! Everyone may leave. (Teachers only because PTA meeting tonight. It seems to be understood that teachers may leave early on PTA days.)

## CONCLUDING COMMENT

The temporal ordering of situations in schools is reflective of a multitude of influences. Broader cultural events are to be celebrated in appropriate ways (as part of the mission of cultural reporduction). This is "demanded" by the larger community--not to celebrate Christmas, for example, would seem very odd to parents, and for that matter one's peers. Celebration of such events as part of one's teaching is a take-for-granted part of being a "good teacher." The ordering of these larger cultural occasions overlays the temporal order of schooling, modifying it in predictable ways. In fact, ceremonial occasions can be planned for as each is a predictable hiatus.

The school year has 185 days, each counted as one unit. Each day can be symbolically cut into pie wedges of designated academic flavors. Each wedge provides (in theory) the minimum daily requirement of knowledge. At the end of 185 days, every student has received (equitably) a full year's dose of instructional fare. But this static description of temporal order as "scheduled" ignores essential features: succession; order; and tempo. For all plans, once the first day of class begins and one is confronted with 25 or 30 charges each with his or her own agenda, what was static becomes dynamic, contingent. Teachers know and students find out that the succession and ordering of events can be interrupted. Situations can be shortened or grow longer and their velocity changed. What on paper is a temporal order emphasizing scheduling, segmentation of activities and promptness frequently becomes ad hoc as students, larger cultural occasions, and other staff interrupt and disrupt the stream of planned situations.[12] In fact, teachers try (especially in the primary grades) to get the classroom organized by Halloween so they can instruct until the children get too excited about Christmas (which will be approximately the day before Thanksgiving)...and so on into Memorial Day. Fifty minutes are planned for reading every day only to be interrupted by telephoned requests for proof of measles innoculation, hearing tests, counselors' appointments, assemblies, tornado watches, student disruptions, broken pencils and lost lunches. Thirty minutes are planned for science, of which twenty involve reading, and then the kids get excited about preparing microscope slides and science time runs over into social studies. It has even been known to run over into recess, for in PHISD no bell stops the flow.

Teachers are embedded in the stream of events. Each time the stream is altered either by design or by interruption, the teacher must manage, reorganize, instruct, manage in a variety of different patterns of improvisation. The conditional nature of classroom life, as it varies around the paper schedule, requires the inseparable operation of classroom management and instruction as virtually one activity. As the real life of schools and classrooms ebbs and flows within the channels provided by formal organization and paper schedules, the channels are realigned, eroded, rebuilt through improvisation based in recipe knowledge. Even as the channels shift, the everyday work of management and instruction is accomplished.

1. We mean this in both senses of the concept.

2. see Jackson, 1968, for a similar point of view.

3. see Jackson, 1968:33-37.

4. Becker, in writing about personal change in adults, outlines the process of situational adjustment:

> The person, as he moves in and out of a variety of social situations, learns the requirements of continuing in each situation and of success in it. If he has a strong desire to continue, the ability to assess accurately what is required, and can deliver the required performance, the individual turns himself into the kind of person the situation demands. (Becker, 1964:44)

   That is, the situation requires a more or less particular set of behaviors for success, (see also Barker, 1968 and 1978).

5. Response by schools to unique mobility patterns can also decouple them from the larger organizational authority structure (see Meyer and Rowan, 1977;1978). Of course, rapid changes district-wide would precapate a major problem in which "thinking-as-usual" and recipes would be unworkable:

> Then a "crisis" arises which, according to W.I. Thomas' famous definition, "interrupts the flow of habit and gives rise to changed conditions of consciousness and practice"; or, as we may say, it overthrows precipitously the actual system of relevances. The cultural pattern no longer functions as a system of tested recipes at hand; it reveals that its applicability is restricted to a specific historical situation. (Schutz, 1964:96)

6. In PHISD school time as elsewhere, "summer" ends with the first week of school in August.

7. Jackson makes similar observations. Teachers can make each room appear unique, can make a personal statement, but such veneer merely glosses over institutional reality (1968:67).

8. See Jackson 1968.

9. Teachers, as a rule, also donate about one to two weeks of their vacation time to working in the school to get ready. Even though they are to report in the third week of August, the rounds of meetings then really do not allow for the necessary time to make the rooms over with a personalized front to encourage student work. Some even arrive as early as the first of August to begin working on their rooms, getting supplies, etc. Except for such events as a long awaited vacation as excuse, teachers are informally expected to show up early as a demonstration of loyalty,

competency, professionalism, and interest in one's job. Rewards are not monetary, obligations not formalized, but there are incentives--being judged a "good teacher" is one; another is having the children "light up."

10. See Goffman, 1959.

11. The traditional prerogative of teachers to schedule instructional time has been challenged under the special circumstances at the magnet school, however. Here the conditions of shorter days (because of busing), and enriched program and a beefed-up administrative structure with a mandate from the central office have led principals to intervene in decisions about teaching time in individual classrooms. One Carmine principal explained how she and another principal did this:

> Principal: We sat down and worked out the schedule and seemingly it's working fine; I think they kind of like it. One thing that I do like that wasn't done previously, teachers tend to feel that there is something sacred about that 8:00-10:00 block of time...they want for Language Arts and that is their cry throughout... you know, "That's my time for reading." Well, we felt that there is nothing sacred about 8-10 that you have have to have reading before 10:00; you can have reading anytime. This put the special area group at a disadvantage because they have been helping out the kids at 9:00 in the morning. They had to wait or go in and maybe do some other assignment so we kind of worked it so they have classes beginning at 9:00 like everybody else.

12. See Hall, 1977:17.

# CHAPTER VIII

## WALKIN' EASY IN HARNESS:[1]
## ORDER, MANAGMENT AND INSTRUCTION IN THE CLASSROOM

> Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. And these words which I command you this day shall be upon your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. And you shall bind them as a sign upon your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. (DEUTERONOMY 6:4-9)

..........

> In the Manchester Lancasterian School [the observer] would have found over a thousand close-packed children, sitting on benches, all being taught in one room, with only two masters and one mistress in charge. At first the noise would have been deafening, the crowd bewildering but soon he would have noticed that there was order and system in the apparent chaos, that the multitude obeyed certain words and commands such as "sling hats," "clean slates," and acted as one child, that each nine or ten boys were in charge of another boy called a monitor, who taught them the lesson that he had lately learned himself, either summoning them to stand around him in one of the semicircles marked in the passage at the end of the forms and teaching them to read from a board with the lesson printed large upon it, or else standing at the end of the form on which they were sitting and dictating to them words of the number of syllables suitable to their particular class. Dictation for the whole school was a triumph of organization. On the platform at one end sat the master, and at a signal from him, or from the "monitor-general," a sort of sergeant-major among children, the monitor of the highest class would lead off with his four-syllabled word, followed in turn by each monitor in the hierarchy down to the bottom. When the process had been repeated for six words, each monitor examined the slates of his charges and signalled to the master by means of a "telegraph" or signboard fixed at the end of the form; as soon as corrections were made, and all the telegraphs turned the right way, the master gave the signal again and another six words were dictated. (J.L. Hammond and Barbara Hammond, in *The Bleak Age*)

> It is more likely that one will deviate from programs set up for one by others than from programs that one has helped establish oneself. The new generation posits a problem of compliance, and its socialization into the institutional order requires the establishment of sanctions. The institutions must and do claim authority over the individual, independently of the subjective meanings he may attach to any particular situation. The priority of the institutional definitions of situations must be consistently maintained over individual temptations at redefinition. The children must be "taught to behave" and, once taught, must be "kept in line." ...If socialization into the institutions has been effective, outright coercive measures can be applied economically and selectively. Most of the time, conduct will occur "spontaneously" within institutionally set channels. The more, on the level of meaning, conduct is taken for granted, the more possible alternatives to the institutional "programs will recede, and the more predictable and controlled conduct will be. Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF REALITY.

The Biblical command above represents presumably (having the ordination of God) a mode of instruction appropriate to its time and place, where the substance of teaching was real and urgent, the process woven into and integral to the everyday lives of children, and education reflective of the paramount reality of the society. Similarly, the Lancasterian system and others like it can be seen to be appropriate to their socio-historical context. Originating in England, monitorial models of schooling became relatively widespread in the United States during the 1830's and 1840's. They reflected the rise of factory systems, of mass production of products in an standardized fashion at least cost. Workers were part of the machines and were not to question; the goal was always increasing productivity. Instructional modes, appropriate to the times heavily emphasized drill, question-answer formats that could be memorized but never questioned. Just as elements of 19th century factories still remain embedded in the current structure of social life, so too do elements of the monitorial schools. Recipes for action must be socio-historically relevant in general and specifically, they must be relevant to the situations where they are to be used whether in the times of Deuteronomy, of the Industrial Revolution, or in Prairie Heights I.S.D. circa. 1980.

From our present view, it appears that the inseparability of instruction and management has been a perennial problem: why else the need to make procedural directives for imparting the Word of God? The particular solutions to this problem are grounded socio-historically in ongoing situations. Recipes for action are constrained by axial institutional norms as they are known and interpreted at every level of the institutions generally, and specifically in schools. In this chapter, we will describe the mix of instructional and managerial recipes from which ongoing classroom organization is built and sustained in PHISD.

The stream of situations that characterize elementary schooling combine classroom management and instruction as a single process. Pure elements of each can be found only if one stops the action, slows the movie and examines a small series of individual frames. Once the classroom day begins, the two are intermingled routinely and in crisis. As we noted in the previous chapter, both instruction and management have the overall goal of shaping human behavior to defined and particular patterns. Instruction, however, is grounded in assumptions regarding fairness and individual student differences. One assumes that students are different in their abilities, interests, and skills and thus will differ in their "learning outcomes;" instructional fairness involves matching the mix of instruction modes and technologies with the student's skill level (interests and abilities) in such a way that students achieve maximally. To forward the idea that all students will be able to achieve equally would be considered by others an indication that something was terribly wrong with you. In contrast, classroom management, particularly aspects focusing on behavior control, assume sameness--i.e., students, without regard to individual differences, are supposed to obey the rules in the same way. In practice, teachers know this is not the case, but the underlying assumption of classroom control is that normal children will respond in very similar ways to the same set of stimuli.

It is not our purpose in this chapter to discuss individual differences between teachers with regard to their styles of classroom management or instruction. Rather we wish to focus on the mix of management and instruction that forms the ongoing organization of the classroom. In doing so, we will view both the management of public and private places within the school.

## CONDITIONS OF WORK AND PATTERNS OF BEHAVIOR

### Teaching with Textbooks

One hundred years after Edison cut the first record, fifty years after sound films, thirty years after television, ten years after minicomputers attained widespread use, classroom work depends on books. Textbooks lend themselves to standardization and can be economically produced in large numbers. Their content can be (and is) scrutinized and controlled before distribution, for their sources are relatively few and the production process slow enough to allow responses to successive screening committees. Heavy reliance on books, however, limits the classroom manager's potential for adapting methods to individual or subject needs.[2] Most of the time, in theory, classroom activity will be restricted to quiet, sedentary projects of a range that could be covered by the word "clerical"--not in the higher sense of "scholarly" nor in the menial sense, but in fact just between the two.

From an organizational point of view the virtue of books is that they require a great deal of time and sedentary effort from the user. In the past when only books as a form of mass media existed, the succession, order, duration, and tempo of instructional events were defined and determined. That is, the process of instruction, using this technology, was built around lessons, increments of knowledge, in a batched manner. Now, however, as the structure of technique has been constructed, habitualized and become part of the institution, organizations must control duration and pace if they are to remain unchanged. The current structure of education in the classroom would be greatly altered if the medium of transmission, books, were changed, as would the larger organizational structure. Both teachers and administrative bureaucracy have a stake in the medium of textbooks. Teachers can use prepared materials based on the books year after year, and thus their jobs are made easier, the cost is reduced for the state, and in effect, the bureaucracy need not inspect a great deal, unless of course, output measures like tests scores drop below collective parental expectations, or embarrass the city fathers. The paradox is that in holding to textbook technology teachers have preserved their autonomy, relative freedom from inspection, by sacrificing autonomy, their freedom to exercise professional judgement in determining how the needs of their students can best be met.

### Managing the Isolated Classroom

As textbook technology, the needs of the larger organization, and the preferences of teachers themselves decree that teachers will be isolated in self-contained classrooms, teachers respond by concentrating their efforts on building the best possible small group work settings in their own classrooms. That is, for teachers, the key problems of instruction and management are shaped from the conditions under which they must work. Unable to tailor the task to the capacities and interests of the workers, the teacher is also unable to tailor the work group to the requirements of the task. While countless unpaid hours are spent transforming surroundings, creating as much as possible in appearance a bright, warm, lively, unthreatening environment where children can feel as welcome and comfortable as possible, there will inevitably be crowding and thus the need for control that it creates.[3] Outnumbered 25 or 30 to 1, crowded into minimum space, the teacher must gain and hold control of behavior in the classroom, but few rewards are available to motivate compliance with rules.[4] These are the resources with which the teacher as manager must do her job.

The group of children who make up the manager's work force has been sifted previously so as to include only those children who are considered normal. But even with this preselection, the teacher is caught in a supervisor's nightmare of affirmative action and quotas. She does not hire a staff to do a job. She is assigned a "work force" that is purposely varied (by the policy of heterogeneous grouping, see Chapter VI). She must not only accept all comers, but she must retain those who, given a choice, would quit. Her job, as classroom manager, is to make these 25 to 30 people work. Yet the nature of the assigned work force insures that, if all do the same task, some will work slowly and some fast. The extent of this variation in the essential school job skill, reading, may be indicated by this teacher "rule of thumb": at a given grade level, say, for example, grade 5, the poorest readers will be that number of grades behind and the best an equal number of grades ahead, a range of reading skill from grade 1 to grade 10. At grade 3, one can expect to have readers three years behind and three ahead. Observations in PHISD classrooms generally support this view; for example the reading skill at the most and least homogeneous schools in our sample, ranged at grade 5 from grade 2 to grade 11.[5] Great ranges in performance push toward in-class and across-class grouping decisions, as we discussed earlier, and they create problems in management as well as limiting the range of appropriate management/instructional recipe solutions.

In her role as behavior manager, the teacher's authority, though limited, is backed by custom and by law. Whatever role she may be called upon to play in the classroom, she is clearly the adult and therefore the legitimate authority over that group. Teachers are even willing, sometimes, to forego the help they need in instruction---"helping teachers" or parent volunteers in the classroom--rather than dilute the managerial authority they derive from being the only adult present.

| Researcher: | Do you get any help from parent volunteers here? |
|---|---|
| Teacher: | We do get help but not in the classroom. I don't like the parent in the classroom because they don't understand the whole concept of the goals, so I let them sit outside the classroom if they want to and I send students out there to do flashcards or whatever. |

Principals recognize the threat that rival adults pose to classroom teachers. As one remarked to us:

> The minute that you bring in assistant teachers such as we have here, they had to get used to having professionals, people that had the very same training that they did. Many of the level three people had as much experience as they had, but nevertheless, the fact that there is another adult

> there can be a threatening thing. You are suddenly on stage constantly. You can't shut the door and let your hair down and just be whatever you want to do or say with those kids because a teacher has power and the minute that you bring another adult into it, you share that power. I call it power because a teacher with no other adult in the room can and has and will be almost ugly at times with kids and will say things that they would never say if there was another adult present in the room. So, that right in itself, the minute that another adult body is in the room, to some degree in varying degrees, inhibits, threatens, whatever the word would be, the presence.....it took the teachers a while just to get used to having assistant teachers, certificated people who think alike, who supposedly love children, are child oriented. In other words, the philosophies are the same, the training and disciplining children, the training in positive reinforcement, all of the skills that a teacher has...yes there is another adult and you are having to share the autonomy or the power or the decision-making or the love, the affection, the attention, which is also threatening to adults.

Finally, teachers as well as administration must face the fact that elementary schools really do exist for the children. Especially when they are neophytes in the process, in primary grades, teachers and administrators want them to see school as a nice friendly place where they can learn and have fun with kids of their own age. But underlying this view is the reality that there are no readily available alternatives for what to do with the children. What would children do? Where would they go? What would parents do, if children didn't attend school?

So for 185 days, six hours per day (over 1,100 hours a year) a PHISD teacher orchestrates, supervises the work of, and improvises work for 25 or 30 children[6]--work that is largely done in traditional (and small) self-contained classrooms where the stream of situations revolve largely around the use of textbooks, and where rewards are few.

## Rewarding Students

> Penalizing a student's grades in one area for transgression in another area develops undesirable association, and leads one to believe that if a student can be rewarded for good behavior he may substitute "being nice" for academic achievement.
> PHISD Punishment Guideline #6

> The effective teacher refrains from imposing school tasks for punitive purposes since the youngster tends to associate misbehavior with school work.
> PHISD Punishment Guideline #13

At the start of the school year in their packet of materials for inservice, every elementary school teacher receives District Guidelines for discipline and punishment. The 1978-79 version of the guidelines was six pages long and contained 70 statements packaged into seven "important criteria in establishing good discipline. Comments immediately following each numbered statement further develop the factors necessary for good classroom management." Areas covered include: punishment; teacher attitude: skill and interest; motivation; and classroom rules.[7] There is a noticeable absence of open discussion of rewards (the word occurs only once in the entire text--in guideline #6 above). This is, perhaps, because teachers have very few rewards to issue.

Grades are rewards for students who successfully master the formal curriculum. For the average child, however, whose grades reflect his or her averageness, they cannot be considered particularly rewarding. For the "low normal" child, grades cannot be seen as rewards at all. Indeed, for students who are not doing adequate work, "progress reports" are issued early on to notify parents. Conferences ensue. Teachers who do not notify parents are denied the use of failing grades (including "D").[8] Teachers have even less to offer when students take achievement tests and must rely on the intrisic motivation of students, the institutional aura of legitimacy that pervades testing, and parent push. While, teachers tell us, most children accept these "rewards" as enough, a few simply "test lower" because of a general lack of interest in the test taking process. Finally, in motivating compliance with classroom and school rules, teachers are mandated to achieve "effective discipline" that

> ....ultimately brings growth in self control, willing acceptance of responsibility, ready compliance with school regulations and earnest effort to profit from school work. (Discipline "Gerneralizations", PHISD)

To do so, they use recipes garnered from the shared stock of knowledge teachers possess recipes designed to use organizationally features and craft to build rewards and gain compliance. While throughout the remainder of this chapter we will reference and discuss different systems for rewarding institutional conformity and punishing the lack of it, we wish to point out now some key features. Teachers can reward students with TIME. The teacher can change the duration of recess either by prolonging it for good behavior or shortening it for bad. Similarly, she can shorten lunch; she can grant breaks-in-the-action and free reading or quiet periods. Finally, she can grant choice in the use of some time to the students themselves.[9] In general, teachers' time strategy, as we noted in the previous chapter, is to schedule important subjects in the morning when student control is easiest and deal with what is left over at the end of the day. Time rewards can be seen to follow this pattern--students generally get them after lunch. Teachers can reward with SPACE. They can let students move around or make them sit in their seats. They can send students to the library or office. They can create areas in their rooms containing fun things to do (generally utilized by the brighter and/or more skilled students who finish their work before others). Teachers can reward with GRADES. PHISD policy expressly forbids using grades as a reward for institutional conformity (as aphoristically stated in Punishment Guideline #6 quoted in the beginning of this chapter). Yet, in the everyday world of the classroom, students can be given points for trying even though they attain the wrong answer (this is an "instructional tool" often found in math classes where a series of steps is necessary to arrive at a solution). In addition, however, students can be given points for conformity to organizational procedure and have points taken away for lack of it. For example, teachers can declare that students will "get ten points off their paper scores for talking," or for getting out of their seats. Similarly, there can be a tendency to reward those students who keep organizational norms, but whose academic performance is mediocre. (In our observations in PHISD, this occurred infrequently). Some teachers use food rewards like M&M's for good behavior. Conformity to organizational rules allows students of unequal academic skill to share equally in the rewards. Students who demonstrate that they can play by the rules are also demonstrating that they can be trusted "outside" the walls of the classroom.

Beyond these, teachers use all sorts of symbolic markers: gold stars (excellent), silver stars (superior), blue stars (average), red checks (unsatisfactory); colored faces--orange is good, red is bad, etc. Some teachers issue their own script in the form of points or "dollars"--a student gets so many points for acts of institutional conformity, loses same for infractions.

For teachers, there must always be a balancing act between motivating students to do their best (but only at academic subjects) and controlling those same students to institutional sameness.

Norms arising from the teaching/learning process keep alive the ideal of management as motivating students. Bureaucratic norms on the other hand promote practices of management aimed at preventing open threats to the order of things. The underlying assumption that reconciles these somewhat incompatible norms is that if order is maintained in the presence of texts for a required time span (enforced by teachers) appropriate learning will result. Thus instruction and management are part of an ongoing mix of direction and discipline presented to students by teachers. Student conformity with both is believed to be most desirable.

## CONTROLLING THE LEARNING PROCESS

PHISD teachers, like education textbooks,[10] define classroom management in terms of student control, discipline, keeping order and, in addition, motivating students and establishing for them a place (and attitude) conducive to learning.[11] One of the major goals of new and old teachers alike is establishing control over the class immediately. In higher grades, order may be established in a few days or a week or two, but in the lower grades, the process takes longer and can last until Thanksgiving (and beyond):

> Researcher: How long does it take; a first grade class before everything is normal? Is it a matter of weeks or half a year before they actually....all of a sudden.
>
> First grade teacher: January.
>
> Researcher: Half a year?
>
> First grade teacher: The first of the year is so hectic, I guess it is because we have so many holidays. But by January, they are into the routine. They come back after Christmas, you can write directions out, I always start out writing things on the board. I try to say M A T H, math and always to see that and to say this is what spelling is -S-P-E-L-L-I-N-G, now I've got three that could tell you right off what it all was. I've got others that it doesn't mean anything to, but I think if they see it over and over, everytime I write something, I try to say it as I write it out. Because I think the more they see it, but by the middle of the year, they will be looking and getting their workbook pages.

However, as we will show, management in the higher grades is of a different kind than in lower grades. What all teachers wish to establish, however, is that they define and control the process. Teachers assert their power actively by setting the procedures that the children will use to respond to management and instruction.

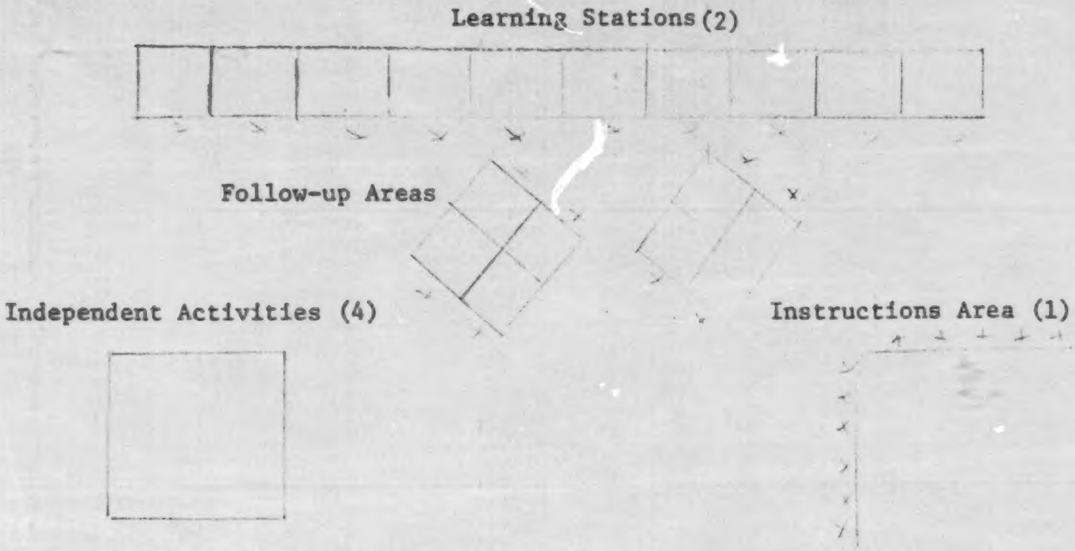
## Constructing Settings

The process of building a classroom social order begins the arrangements of furnishings, placement of materials and other strategic devices. Being able to construct a setting aids greatly in the control of the stream of situations of which it is a part. Those who construct the setting know its rules and, given that others do not collectively rebel, possess advantages. Within her classroom, the teacher alone may designate places where each student may sit or stand. Always with the proviso that formal equality among students be symbolized -- there are no "first chairs" in classrooms -- teachers can arrange chairs and desks to suit themselves (i.e., to fit their definition of what should happen in the room). One should note, however, that teachers' advantage in setting control wanes as children learn the rules ("learn to behave"). Recipes for setting construction must be replaced by recipes for maintaining the structure ("keeping the children in line").

Arrangements of furniture in classrooms can take a wide variety of forms each ideally providing the staging necessary to establish the "right atmosphere" for teachers to instruct and manage and students to learn. Teachers may wish to promote or discourage face-to-face interactions among the students. A few want to limit all interaction to teacher-student only, and thus arrange desks in lines that face front, a common arrangement at grade 6 where teachers are preparing pupils for the impersonal world they perceive in secondary schools. Alternatively, classroom settings can reflect grouping, for example, four work areas for four separate groups. Arrangements can be made to cycle students through a series of areas or stations (thereby presenting temporal succession and order) as indicated in Figure 8-1. Arrangements typified

Figure 8-1

Example of a Classroom Management Plan[12]


Learning Stations (2)
Follow-up Areas
Independent Activities (4)
Instructions Area (1)

2 hour block which class rotates thru:

1. 30 minutes of small group instruction
2. 30 minutes learning stations - teacher made instructural games or puzzles which require student to follow directions
3. 30 minutes drill or workbook tasks
4. 30 minutes student chooses an activity, read book, view filmstrip, etc.

by the diagram are most often found in the lower grades (K-3) and decrease in frequency as grade level rises. In the lower grades, children are more often seated facing each other, encouraging interaction, and plenty of space is left for moving around. Even for primary grade teachers, however, who create such settings and talk about them (Is there enough stimulation in the environment? Is student movement orderly from learning station to station? Are desks arranged to encourage teamwork or individual endeavor?), the bottom line is controlling students--their movement and their noise.[13] Following standard practice, to establish routine firmly before introducing variation, teachers assign places the first day on the basis of whatever reputation the children may have acquired, and try to stick with this lineup for a while.

On this first day they also designate the opening set of student leaders, thus seeking to involve the pupils in classroom management. Teachers believe students have a responsibility to uphold the appearance of order in the classroom. Every classroom, even first grade, has student leaders with clerical and maintenance responsibilities: taking care of chalkboards, plants, books, library book records, lunch orders. By the 6th grade, for example, these are the duties that students have taken over in one classroom:

> Secretary: Take lunch count, hand out end-of-the-day announcements, pass out papers.
>
> Treasurer: Collect money.
>
> Sergeant at Arms: Line class up for lunch, PE, and Music. Be aware of time schedules.
>
> Art assistants (2): Pass out supplies, help set up projects, collect supplies brought from home, help with clean-up.
>
> Maintenance engineers (2): Check room at end of day--chairs, floors, clean, lockers closed, erase boards, check book tables and shelves.
>
> Classroom monitor: At all times be aware of classroom order,

keep study hall, don't wait until teacher says, ".....

TV controller: Keep up with schedules, turn set on, check guides, post local programs of interest for home viewing.

These offices rotate monthly at the teacher's discretion. From another class in a different school comes the following arrangement as spelled out on poster and mounted on the wall:

"Classroom Management System"

The classroom managers are elected monthly. This month's managers are pictured above the display. These are their duties:

Manager - line up class, read announcements, make sure class jobs are completed, take charge when the teacher is out of the room.

Asst. Mgr. - check teacher's mailbox twice a day, take charge of lunch room routine, take charge of class in absence of teacher and manager.

Clerk - lunch count, take roll for music and P.E.

Librarian - check out library books, take care of classroom books.

Applicable Code: The MARS CODE: Manners, Attitude, Responsibility, Self Discipline.

A comparable list from a 1st grade classroom includes these Helping Hands duty assignments: Fire Drill, Chairs, Shelves, Messenger, Leader-boy, Leader - girl, Pledge, Chalkboard. These are the children who will head lines moving toward the lunchroom, hold the flag for the Pledge of Allegiance that starts the day, and generally help with the job of keeping the room tidy.

In general, just as the diversity of classroom settings is reduced by the sixth grade, so too is the degree to which rules and management systems are externalized. Rules that in first grade are posted on doors and walls and read and recited out loud are absent by sixth grade. What was external, it is believed, should be internalized and taken for granted. While it may not be true in a few specific cases, one can safely guess, upon entering a sixth grade that has rules posted on the doors and walls, that inside the classroom the teacher is having serious problems with student behavior.

## The Standard Mix of Instruction and Management

Oddly enough, the State definition of teacher tasks does not include any reference to classroom management, but focuses explicitly on instruction. State Guidelines (as accepted by PHISD) divide the teacher's working day into segments, each of which is designated for instruction in some academic subject. There are no allowances for organizing for and activating instructional situations, nor for terminations of them (both of which involve the establishment and maintenance of order). Actual time spent in instruction is reduced substantially by the necessity for establishing, changing, reestablishing classroom order. There is, we have noted, a cyclic and standardized schedule for situations carried on in and outside the classroom. Termination of one situation and the activation of another are management tasks that take routinely 10% of instructional time on such procedures as lining up, putting on or taking off coats, taking attendance, checking books and assignments, and administering rewards as part of the behavior control system. When problems arise, the proportion of time spent managing (sustaining, and restoring order) can easily approach 50%

(and even higher).[14] Teachers view the time spent on management and disciplining of students as essential prerequisites for instruction--unfortunate prerequisites but unavoidable given the nature of their charges. (Never, it should be noted, do teachers attribute all or part of this problem to the nature of school organization.)

Not untypical of the instruction/management time allotment encountered in classrooms is that described below, a sample that illustrates the mix of both routine administration and minor problem solving:

> Today Miss Phillip's homeroom science class is denied their regular pay. (The system is that at the start of each class, each member of the class receives a certain number of points (called "dollars"). There is also the same awarded to the class as a whole, and that is what is recorded on the chart at the front of the room. Individuals, and sometimes, as happened today, a whole class, are docked a certain number of points for various types of mild and severe offenses. In taking away their whole-class pay, the teacher remarks, "It isn't that you were that noisy, you just didn't maintain quiet and order." Besides the group punishment, the teacher collects 10 points each from each student who admits to having talked in the hall on the way to class. If they say they didn't talk, they don't have to pay.
>
> Time spent on this process is a follows:
>
> 10 minutes lining up to change classrooms (includes getting proper books)
> 5 minutes spent collecting point tokens form those who talked in line, discussing behavior standards with class, retracting points given out by mistake before the penalty was assessed.
> 5 minutes answering individual questions (what I could hear seemed to be about class assignments) at at teachers' desk.
> All this time most students sit and do nothing. 20 minutes into a 45 minute class, instruction begins. (Fieldnotes, 1979)

In the everyday stream of classroom situations, management can easily come to dominate the teaching process. This is so because of the nature of the rewards teachers have available for academic achievement and institutional conformity--rewards which are roughly the same, or involve trade-offs between instruction and management. Thus, third grade students who are working on their reports get "extra points" which they can redeem as free time. Moreover, an academic class may be cancelled entirely, or individual students excused, as a reward for good behavior:

> Everyone gets 10 points when they enter the classroom. A student walks around with a cigar box full of construction paper "money" in various colors denoting value and gives each student a ten. Today this student is Pam. Students who misbehave have some or all of that taken away depending on severity of offense. Points, or money, as they are termed interchangeably, can accumulate for individual rewards.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Homework | 150 points | (Awardee may cash in 150 points and be excused from an assignment) |
| 1 Class | 250 points | (Skip a Class) |

> There is also a system of group points, money which can be earned only by cooperation among the whole group and which may be spent by the whole group in ways designated by the teacher. This reading class has accumulated 50 such points in a 5-week period, and today they are going to spend them for a 45 minute recess. Away we go!

The practice of granting privileges at the start of the year/day/hour is well nigh universal so that teachers will have something to withhold if rules are broken. Furthermore, teachers try to establish the appropriate motivational tone for the year/day/hour: self-control, positive attitude, acceptance of responsibility, and generally good manners are qualities sought. Many teachers prepare at the start of the year displays of moral maxims emphasizing these qualities (like the recipe we reproduced from one sixth grade at the beginning of this volume.)[15]

Reinforcement of these attitudes and consonant behavior will take the form of payments and penalties, often elaborately conceived. These matters are explained and discussed in the early weeks, for much is thought to depend on making the rules clear to all from the start. As one teacher expressed to us the "Never smile before Christmas" theme recurrent in teacher dialogue,

> While those clothes are still stiff with starch, those new school clothes, you know, we've got to go over all those rules right away, because I think if you lose them right there at first...You can always let up, but you can never get them back.

This 1st grade teacher's system is to give each child a pass at the start of the year:

> It's a little piece of paper with a smiley face on it with their name on it, so that pass is a privilege for them to go and do things (move about the room, consult books on their own, replace supplies, play quiet games when work is completed) if they are quiet. But if they are noisy, then they have to bring the pass to me and go back to their seats, and I will find something for them to do.

Sixth grade versions are, generally, more sophisticated and detailed than those found in the earlier grades but are substantively similar. In both cases teachers must create privileges of which pupils can be deprived if they misbehave.

## Managing Diversity

Four standard ways teachers can cope with the diversity of their class groups involve time and task. Teachers can vary the task within the same time frame for the task to be done; alternatively they can require the same task, but make allowances for the time differentials of students in accomplishment. A third strategy is to make all students do the same task in the same time frame, while a final strategy is to vary both task and time. Multiple adoptions of reading texts illustrate the first technique. Using up to five levels of texts within a single homeroom, or as many as nine with cross-class grouping, teachers can provide reading material suitable for most pupils. If the teachers are unflappable and able to control the behavior of five different groups of lively children with an occasional glance while devoting almost full attention to the needs and performance of the one child they are listening to, this form of task division works splendidly--as a teaching technique. However, for the classroom manager who must evaluate performance, task variation is not entirely satisfactory. For grading purposes (and maintaining morale), achievement at all five or nine levels has to be recognized as equally valuable, yet not equivalent. Performances can not be judged against each other because the children are working at different levels; yet, they must be compared and ranked on an obligatory five point or letter grade scale that assumes sameness. One way of making do between these incompatible demands is grade inflation. For practical purposes, grades become excellent, good, and needs improvement (this last grade, it goes without saying, could be applied to virtually all of us). Within the last category are those children who need additional help--which they might get from Resource (see Chapter VI) if they qualify, and if they do not, from the teacher when she can "make time." Mathematics instruction illustrates the third strategy. Pace is uniform as is the subject matter. Variation is provided for in the exercises and problem sets: stronger students do more problems in the same time and they do the harder problems. Teachers often adopt an instructional strategy of teaching to the majority of the class below the level of the strongest students, and rely on text generated problems to keep better students occupied. In the few cases where teachers have students who are very adroit at mathematics, they must generate (usually with the aid of a consultant) additional materials. "Contracts," used mainly with slow students, are examples of varying both time and task. Contracts are packets of work teachers prepare for individuals or small groups to complete--each student at his or her own pace. Every child must complete each assignment before going to the next. This procedure ensures not only continuity (the slow students are not repeatedly left behind with work unfinished when the class moves on), but also allows, teachers say, for feelings of genuine accomplishment and mastery for the child when the task is finished. But, as with other techniques, what makes instructional sense fails to meet accountability needs of the organization. It is impossible to say that Johnnie did "A" quality work using an alternative (lower level) textbook, on "C" quantity of Contracts, which is roughly equivalent of "D" work, had Johnnie been reading out of the regular 5th grade textbook. Making do, the teacher gives Johnnie a "C," and the grading period comes to a close. But the very next class day, the whole class, ready or not, begins a new series of materials (and for Johnnie a series of new learning contracts). For children in the "contracts group," organizational attempts to bring order to the learning process serve notice that they are actually deficient. For the teacher who is attempting as both instructor and manager to provide motivation, grades can crush whatever confidence has been built in children who will never achieve more than a "C" if graded on a straight A-F scale.

One way to handle the inherent difficulties in trying to weigh the substance of task accomplishment, given variations of task made necessary by the diversity of the work force (students) is to put great stress on form. Teachers work continually to clarify for the group exactly what documents, in what format, are required to demonstrate task completion. Inscriptions such as the following appear everywhere on chalkboards:

> FOLDERS DUE THURSDAY
> 1) Title page
> 2) Vocabulary
> 3) Peoples of Mesopotamia
> 4) 3 Fact Quiz
> 5) Comparison of BR and RS
> 6) Chart of Hebrew History
> 7) Phoenicia
> 8) Map
>
> --from a 6th grade board, 1979

As a part of the overall management of instruction, teachers often require students to make such notebooks in social studies, science, math, language, and reading. In them are filed classwork, homework, and tests. Considerable amounts of class time are devoted to getting these pages in the designated order up-to-date, each sheet clearly labeled with the student's name and date of completion.

> Instruction in science begins when the teacher says, "We're going to have to do a little housekeeping today, folks, as far as notebooks and all that." She asks two students to distribute notebooks to members of the class.

> "Let me tell you all. That way we don't have to repeat 30 times. The only papers I want are the ones with a grade on them or assignments completed that should have been graded. Each page must have your name and homeroom written on it. Do this at home. Now do the two science assignments: 1) complete the list of definitions assigned yesterday and 2) make a list of 10 things each you can see, hear, taste, smell, or feel."
>
> (Aside to me: "Sorry this isn't a lesson, it's cleaning.") "William, why don't you close the door and get down the record player." Teacher puts on a "Saturday Night-Fever" album on low volume. "I'll leave this on as long as we can't hear talking over it." Someone asks if it would be OK for him to bring an album from home. She says yes if it is mellow--no hard disco. That gets us all hyped up and that's the last thing we need.

Even in first grade, comparable efforts are made to ensure that every child knows every day exactly what work he must complete. Before all the children have learned to read their names, teachers begin to list the day's assignments meticulously on the board: "Reading: Red Group 7-8, Blue Group 11-13....All: Make 5 fans. Color 4 yellow. Color 1 brown." Teachers say that such explicitness develops habits of "independent work." The meaning of independent work for the teacher is that there will be no disagreement about what work is to be done--the work set by her--and that the student can follow directions without excessive supervision. If these conditions can be made to obtain, there will be a uniform basis upon which the teacher as supervisor can compare the production of all group members. Motivating the children becomes part of the problem matrix because the work to be done, its sequencing, duration and tempo are pre-defined. Teachers must stir interest in that topic, for that time/place for that child. In this situation, the words of a widely used text for management trainees applies to classrooms as well as shops and offices:

> Managers in all types of organizations are continually faced with the fact that vast differences exist in the performance of a group of employees. Some employees always perform at high levels, need little or no direction, and appear to enjoy what they are doing. On the other hand, other employees perform only at marginal levels, require constant attention, and are often absent from their work stations.
>
> The reasons for these differences in performance are varied and complex. We could attribute these differences to certain individual characteristics such as personality, intelligence, or ability. We could also focus on organizational influences such as the job, the supervisor's style, or the reward system used by the organization as contributing to these differences in performance. The core concept associated with each of these properties is *motivation.*
>
> (Ivancevich, et al, 1977)

Our observation in Prairie Heights is that of the two groups of influences mentioned here as affecting motivation, teachers overwhelmingly attribute differences in work performance to individual differences and not to organizational characteristics.[16] When they do consider organizational factors, they tend to look at their own performance as supervisors and to ignore the effects of curriculum (formal and hidden) and of the reward system.

## Variations in Motivation Rewards

In providing rewards to help motivate children's performances, teacher-managers have two complementary systems they use. These can be labeled: (1) perform to please mommy and (2) perform because you will benefit from what you learn and earn external material goods. The first is most prevalent at the first grade; ideally it is gradually phased out and replaced by the second by grade 6. Personal (mommy's/teacher's) approval as a form of positive reinforcement can be given in "fun ways" in the early grades (but not so openly in the higher ones):

> On the teacher's desk: a stack of construction paper notes, illustrated and prepared with the following legends:
>
> "Quiet as a Mouse,"
> "_____ was flying high today in ______,"
> "A special message,"
> "_____ had Roaring Good Work,"
> "I'm crazy about ________,"
>
> On the back wall, each child has a paper on the Good Citizen Board. Each paper has a blank for M,T,W,TH,F. Yesterday every child got a red star. Today Michael is asked to turn in "his Citizenship," and he pulls his sheet down from the board and takes it to the teacher. (He was lobbing first playdough ice cream and finally plastic dishes at Chris. I imagine a lot of people would have loved to join him.) The teacher has a pumpkin shaped rubber stamp used to mark "good readers." The teacher asks who likes to read. All but one say "ME,ME." Each is stamped. One boy says, "No, I'm not such a good reader." The teacher says, "Yes you are," and stamps him too.

What is given is teacher's (mommy's) approval; what is withheld is the same. A less experienced teacher tries a more legalistic approach with the same class and runs into trouble:

> The student teacher announces that because there was too much noise on Friday, today's rules will be as follows: No [learning] centers today. No one may leave his chair. There will be no talking. "When you don't behave right, you can't have privileges." (Note: moving and talking have been defined as privileges to be granted by the teacher. Centers, which are provided for individualized learning, are privileges.)
>
> Having set forth this unenforceable array of rules, she must then backpedal to provide for those who will finish their work early.
>
> Expedient A: "I'm going to put out paper (puts paper on teacher's desk) and you may take one piece and color on it."
>
> Expedient B: Allows use of SRA reading kits.
>
> Expedient C: Calls those who have obviously finished their work to the front of the room to drill with flash cards. (Unfortunately these are the kids who need drill least.)
>
> Expedient D: Overlooks quiet talking and movement

By 6th grade, the changeover to legalistic, rational reward punishment systems is nearly complete. It is here that the "point systems" appear and grades are taken most seriously. There is a conscious effort to cut children off from teacher nurturance at this age in order to prepare them for secondary school. But among teachers, 6th grade is considered the hardest to control, the hardest to motivate:

> Jane (a 6th grade teacher) tells us that everyone at Duncan--teachers, Counselors, Resource teachers--hates 6th grade. When they see 6th graders in the hall, they pretend they never knew them--though many of these kids have been here since kindergarten. Jane thinks perhaps it's because elementary teachers like little kids, and 6th graders are getting too big to be likeable. She gets along with them extremely well, as do the other 2 Duncan 6th grade teachers, from our observation. (Jane was trained as a secondary English teacher.) Similar feeling seemed to prevail last year at Carmine.

Contrast the following statement by a 1st grade teacher:

> Researcher: How do you get them pepped up on Monday morning?
>
> Teacher: Oh, listen, that is the beauty of 1st graders, you don't have to get them pepped up. Oh, you mean get them motivated? It is amazing. I don't think we have to do a thing.

Several factors make teachers' management problems more difficult for 6th graders. First, teachers do not exaggerate the psychological component. Sixth graders are more capable than six year olds; however, they are also much more aware of the clash between the traditional values promulgated by schools and the consumer values of the world outside. Even more difficult, they are beginning the developmental task of separating themselves from their parents and other adult authorities, and they are supported in this task by peer ties that may interfere with the teacher's efforts to reach students as individuals.

Organizational characteristics, too, impact 6th grade differently than they do 1st. The student job itself, mastery of the formal and hidden curricula, is less rewarding, on the whole, at 6th grade. The instrinsic rewards of the formal curriculum have increased, but only for students who read well. Whereas novelty of material is a free good in grade 1, providing adequate stimulation becomes increasingly expensive at higher grades. Greater resources are needed: library books, microscopes, band instruments. Finely tuned flexible planning is required. One 6th grade teacher confessed that however long we waited we would never see a day that exactly matched the posted schedule:

> To my remark that she's always promising me I'll see a day that goes by the schedule and it's never happened yet in the many times I've come, the teacher says if I really want to know, they plan it that way. Sixth grade cannot be managed on a cut-and dried schedule. You've got to mix it up, put in lots of variety - especially art - that's the greatest motivator there is. Last week she got the kids out front to sketch the farmhouse across the street, and that was great. Field trips are another super tool, worth the hassle even though a couple of kids gave her a hard time when they went to Old City Park.

For success in the informal curriculum, as Jackson remarks, there can be no intrinsic reward.[17] The only reward when one is crowded and controlled is relief - and we see, in confirmation, that the highest rewards 6th graders can achieve (450 points, the pay for 9 weeks of perfect behavior in one class) is to be allowed out of the classroom. Sixth graders will work for a chance to teach 1st graders colors, help children cross the street, run off dittos in the office, clean the workroom for teachers. First graders are allowed more freedom of movement in the classroom. (Literally, 22 first graders, a typical class, with their tiny tables, have more room to move than the typical 6th grade class, 29 nearly adult size people with proportionately larger furniture, in an identical room, which is what they get, almost always.) First graders also get shorter work periods, earlier lunch, more breaks.

First grade teachers are more nuturing, less controlling. Necessarily, then, more and more as the children mature, reliance shifts to external rewards, and of these the teacher-manager has few to give. Ordinarily workers are paid; pupils pay their supervisors - in uniflated currency, attention. For some kids, elementary education will pay off eventually. They will outdistance the mass of students and reach a selective college or professional school. Merely moving through the grades in step with the crowd can confer no marginal advantage. Even school failure can only hurt those students who have the personal qualifications to move into middle class jobs. By 6th grade it is becoming fairly clear which category each child fits, and students could be expected to adjust their efforts accordingly.

For the classroom manager, too, expectations are adjusted to fit the possibilities. They are not organized to change the school system - let alone the society that channels how rewards will be distributed among children. They are fully occupied with arranging work and social relationships in their classrooms. They concentrate their efforts where the rewards for themselves are greatest, in personal interaction with the children they teach.

## Controlling Information

> The teacher well-versed in student reactions simply takes foreign matter (library book, other subject) from a student without comment. PHISD Teacher Planning Guideline # 33

Though the teacher does not control selection of textbooks, the fact that textbooks dominate the schooling process reinforces the teacher's dominant position in relation to students. She knows what's in those books, and she can control the pace at which she releases this information. Rival information sources are kept to a minimum, relegated to the periphery of the curriculum, or ignored[18] almost always with the stock excuse that time is short. For example, every school has a small library run by a librarian who is also a certified and experienced teacher. The librarian's role, however, is always to supplement the teacher-text directed curriculum. She is invited into the classroom to do reviews of supplementary books. The children are brought to the library to hear stories or to learn about the Dewey Decimal Classification. The collection consists largely of reference books and recreational reading; those substantial books that are bought are used for individual student reports rather than as resources central to learning. And if the library is peripheral, another potentially rich resource, TV, is even more marginal as an instructional technology but, *au contraire* quite important as a management tool.

From its transmitter at Carmine School, PHISD beams several programs each week for each grade level. The programs are received in every classroom--in about half of these rooms in color--a considerable investment for the district. Week after week, the classroom receivers (televisions) are snapped on at an appointed hour, the shades are pulled, the lights shut off and theater-like darkness follows. Interaction becomes screen-to-students, rather than teacher-to-students. Now with only minor disturbances of the class for behavior control--a look over from the desk, a clearing of the throat--the teacher has thirty minutes to catch up on paperwork, if she has a little lamp on her desk as most do. Or she can move to the hall, or end of the partition, to whisper with her colleagues, similarly freed. On some occasions, she may watch the program with the children. When the program has ended, the teacher restores the situational stream: shades open; lights on; douse the set; give directions on how to proceed to the next activity she has planned. Only when the teacher watches with the children is there ever any follow-up, and in our observation this occurs regularly only in the primary grades. Even there, follow-up consists most often of just a sentence or two immediately followed by directions on how to proceed to the next activity (e.g., "okay, lets clean up for lunch..."). On the other hand television is used as a management tool virtually every day, usually as a time filler, sometimes as a reward. Teachers threaten to deny students TV time if they continue to misbehave both on an individual and class basis. In addition, students who have earned the appropriate numbers of points are allowed to do what they want with "their TV time."

We believe that teachers do not count TV seriously among their instructional resources because the medium challenges comfortable recipes based on textbooks. As an important element in curriculum, for instance (rather than the optional extra it is now), TV instruction would undercut the teacher's control over distribution of information in the classroom. Other knowledgeable adults, visually and audibly present as authors of textbooks are not, would share the teacher's subject matter expertise. Such a contingency poses relatively little threat to primary teachers, but it has serious implications for teachers in upper grades. This is because programs beamed at lower grades are mostly intended to arouse interest, to motivate effort on teacher defined tasks, whereas programs for higher grades present substance--often on a fairly sophisticated level. Thus a primary teacher can watch a TV presentation with her class, or even just glance at the screen occasionally while correcting papers, and at the close ad lib a follow-up response. The upper level teacher however, in our observation, would need prior preparation in a wide range of topics from the implications of the division of labor through history of popular music to spelling, in order to respond appropriately to one week's presentations for grade 6. Teachers, as we point out in the previous chapter, simply do not have the necessary preparation time--time away from students in which they can preview the program and accompanying materials (if any) and prepare instruction. While teachers' instructional authority might be diluted by the electronic introduction of this array of experts into the classroom, responsibility for managing a classroom--dealing with 25-30 children of varying abilities, skills, knowledge, and motivation in a small room for six hours a day--would remain the teacher's alone. The rewards of her job would be reduced and the problems retained.

A second reason for teachers' failure to move beyond the textbook based system to serious use of newer media is that the technology would probably be centrally controlled, as TV is now, and so would impinge on the teachers' prerogative to adjust timing and sequence of instruction to the needs of their classes day by day and hour by hour. Whoever controls programming controls not only content, but emphasis, time (the succession, ordering, duration and pace of events), and context--all elements of craft that the teacher now supplies. In PHISD, teachers may express preferences about which programs they want transmitted for their grade level (passed up from the local school through committee), but their choices are limited because they do not know what programs could be available. Selected programs are transmitted several times each week so that the teacher can work them into her plans to an extent largely determined by her--including ignoring the set or using it as entertainment/reward, as some do. Use of television as the prime or even as one of the prime technologies would reduce teacher autonomy in scheduling and thus reduce capacity to respond flexibly to 25-30 children.

A third factor influencing the use of television as an instructional medium concerns the way in which some teacher "view" it--namely as entertainment. After all, this is, in fact, one of the primary ways in which they use it in their own lives. It is a "foreign" instructional technology. Coupled with teacher views of television are, critically, children's views, garnered, perhaps, from the way in which television is used in the home--as entertainment. In addition, television is a "cool medium" and as such seems removed the warm caring concern for the student's individual needs that is central to teacher images of the teaching/learning process--education.

The reaction to TV as a teaching medium might be quite different, though no more favorable, if innumerable channels were available to individual classrooms on call and videotaping capability were provided, for example, for student projects. This would, however, pose a threat to teachers' craft as libraries do now. To use such diversified resources as well stocked libraries of books or video tapes would require an immense expansion of teachers' knowledge. Just to use a school library for maximum effectiveness, a teacher would need to know children's literature and standard reference books, both respectable professional specialties in themselves, and the possibilities for using such resources for assisting student-directed learning would extend the demands on the teacher indefinitely from there. This would also increase the costs for the organization and erode standardization and predictability of product vital to the organization of schooling. None of these obstacles to serious consideration of an "electronic curriculum" has been directly expressed to us; no teacher organization is on record against technological change; we merely infer from what we observe: teachers use TV very sparingly to supplement curriculum and rather more often as a tool for classroom management. Moreover it appears likely that full use of available TV resources would require changes in management/instructional recipes throughout the system, an outcome for which there is no demand and which defies the gravitational inertia of recipes sanctioned by law and custom. The result of this combination of circumstances is ironical: designed to enrich curriculum, television provides for teachers a management tool, a way of filling time and getting some relief from the constant press of student demands; as an instructional medium, however, it is considered a "frill" for which "there isn't any time."

## Filling Time

The explanation that time is too short for frills is belied by the fact that work is regularly assigned in all grades with the obvious function of filling time. Most often time filling occurs late in the school year, late in the week, or late in the day. It is particularly important to understand that time filling is not a beginner's desperate makeshift.[19] Everyday life in the school requires talent for improvisation in structuring time as urgently as it requires knowledge of phonics technique. Whole-school activities like assemblies are dismissed early, and teachers are expected to take up the slack:

> When I (researcher) arrived, the principal's secretary informed me that the 6th graders were in an assembly. Just then we heard them coming down the hall. The assembly was out 15 minutes early. It was supposed to last until 2:45, only five minutes before school lets out, but it was over at 2:30. This left Ms. S. with 20 minutes to entertain her class..Ms. S. asked one student to tell me about the assembly. (The assembly featured a film about rabies, which was intended to persuade the students to stay away from unknown and wild animals. The student that related this to me was totally unimpressed.) The teacher then directed the class to hand in a health assignment. Those who hadn't done the assignment quickly got to work; this was about 4 our of 16 students. The others went on to other projects. Six students were involved in a checkers match. The classroom had a board with both checkers and chess men. Two other students were working on maps of Europe. They had to identify the countries and then color Eastern and Western Europe differently in blocks corresponding to the free and communist blocks! Another student was experimenting with the class rats, a matched pair, white with pink eyes. Obviously the teacher had put aside provisions for temporal emergencies.

Greater ingenuity still is called for when an assembly is flat cancelled:

> Mrs. A. tells me that art and an assembly have been cancelled today, and she has had the kids since 11:00. Over an hour of scheduled activity has had to be planned. The students are working on math worksheets. When the computations are completed, the sheets are colored, then cut out and glued on construction paper to look like sailboats and ice cream cones. Those worksheets had been prepared for tomorrow's math class; tonight Mrs. A. will have to work out a whole new set.

Such time filling activities occur not only in emergencies, but routinely. Band instructors, for example, do not show up and teachers are confronted with alterations in schedule and fifty minutes of time. Management of minor behavior problems amongst the children reduces the time left for instruction and rather than start a lesson that will go undone, teachers adjust. Finally, one should note that filling students' time can also make time for teachers. Generally, time filling of this sort occurs for no more than twenty or thirty (at maximum) minutes. Sometimes teachers get no relief from the children's presence at all--not even at lunch--and they simply do not have the energy to sustain top-of-form, instructional-managerial performance for six hours straight. But in order to have relief for themselves, they must fill the students' time, for one cannot let students choose what it is they wish to do. The key way this is done is through use of the formal curriculum. Teachers can make in-class whole group assignments that focus their activity away from instruction and toward supervision, and student attention onto their own work and away from the teacher. Where students are not particularly motivated to do their own work, this is impossible;

however, for class groups who are interested in doing their work and giving a good performance, it is not only possible but can even allow the teacher to leave the room:

> Today the teacher really piled the work on her reading group, the top third of Adobe 6th grade, and it seemed to me a clear attempt--very successful--to control rather than instruct. Work due by next week (Today is Thursday.) includes as she reminded the class at least three times this morning, a long worksheet (3 pages of questions) concerning a story they were assigned to read today, a book jacket to design and fashion from construction paper, a Readers' Digest assignment, and an SRA assignment. In response to a query as to whether some of this work could be done at home over the weekend, the teacher said no, no homework may be done on weekends; everything must be completed in class. Further emphasizing the point, she then reminded the class that 30 minutes of tomorrow's reading time will be spent in the library, a fact which makes efficient use of today's time even more urgent. All this work was explained as if it had been decreed by some Outside Force rather than arranged by the teacher herself. The no homework rule was explained to the students (and when I asked, to me, later) in all sincerity as a favor to the students. "I don't want to do school work over the weekend, and I don't think students should either." Now the amazing payoff is that having assigned all this work, the teacher left the room with the fieldwork and went to the lounge for a 20 minute coffee break.

Being able to fill students' time without surveillance is possible because of student interest in and ability to do the work being required, and importantly because the teacher has faith that most of the students will consent to this arrangement of events. She can be aided by a student Sergeant-at-Arms who stands in her stead and takes names of those who violate her definition of the situation, or by having another teacher look in on her class while she is gone. But these measures would be merely stop-gap if a classroom management system was not already virtually taken-for-granted by the children (even first graders) that has at its base the axiom that the teacher is in charge (both when she is there and when she is not).

## Putting Yourself in Charge

PHISD elementary teachers possess a collective stock of knowledge about effective classroom management. Elements of this knowledge can be found in texts on the subject as well as in the PHISD "Discipline Guidelines." The four-dimensional reality unfolds daily in the classroom. Teachers have worked out variations that suit the subject matter to be taught (e.g., reading), and that fit what they perceive to be the students' abilities to understand, behave by, and internalize particular lines of activity. But all such systems have at their base teacher dominance of the defining process; it is the teacher who must bind the lives of 25-30 people into a stream of situations. Teachers must be able to activate, orchestrate, and terminate events. Moreover, although not as obviously planned as the integration of concepts, exercises, etc., in the formal curriculum whereby students move from the simple to the more complex as they progress through the grade sequence, management of instruction and instruction in management are just as crucial. Teachers in the sixth grade are dependent on those who have come before them to have sufficiently socialized the children to the management/instruction process so that in the fall they can re-assert their authority to define and control the learning process. Based on our observations and talks with teachers and principals, we believe that in general, PHISD teachers attempt to enact (some more successfully that others) instruction/management plans based in the following six action rules.

1. Establish routine the first weeks of school. Expect everyone to get organized--and then work hard to make sure it happens. Rather than establish rules of conduct, train students to plan

their time and complete their daily work without a lot of supervision by the teacher. Put expectations in writing: each day's assignments on the board and on paper for each student. One teacher wrote out a two page contract for completion of one chapter in a science book. Each of six tasks based on the chapter was given a point value up to 50 points, subdivided by subtask. Each subtask was labelled to indicate whether responsibility for it was entirely individual (reading, learning vocabulary) or to be shared by teacher and class (producing an illustrated scrapbook). Dates for completion were specified a week in advance so that students who were absent would know exactly what was expected. Maintain routine: establish new (more) rules only if problems arise.

2. Involve the kids personally. This increases their identification with your program by giving them a part. Every classroom has student leaders (helpers) with clerical and maintenance responsibilities: taking care of chalkboards, plants, books, library book records, lunch orders. Older students may work in the office as Aides, guard street crossings, or even tutor younger children. All teachers of younger children, particularly, talk of "We" rather than "I" and "You," especially when trying to establish control: "We have some trash around our places. We can't go anywhere when we haven't picked up our trash."

3. Set the right tone. Especially at the start of the school year classroom walls problaim moral maxims. From a 5th grade room, the MARS Code: Manners, Attitude, Responsibility, Self

discipline. From a 6th grade: some rules for getting along in submarine-tight quarters:

> Rules: 1. Desks empty! 2. Lockers clean! 3. Doors closed! 4. Floor cleaned. 5. Students organized.

More colloquially expressed on an adjoining wall:

> 1. If you open it, close it. 2. If you turn it on, turn if off. 3. If you don't know how to operate it, leave it alone. 4. If it doesn't concern you, don't mess with it.

Teachers assert their authority effectively without being overbearing. Sometimes they do this by setting a formal tone as did a kindergarten teacher who almost always addressed her pupils as "Mr. Barker" or "Miss Ewing." She consistently spoke of herself as "Mrs. Smith." She waits until all the children have arrived before she enters the room, because when children come early, there's nothing to do but talk with them. "You can't do anything until everyone is there." Another teacher, this one 5th grade, treated her pupils as courteously as if they were adults, being particularly careful never to correct a student in the hearing of his peers, although she stopped student quarrels cold with a quiet, "No."

4. Enforce the rules consistently. For example, sixth grade teachers at one school enforce the rules with behavior mod as one teacher describes:

> I hand every child in my room a green ticket and that means "you're okay" and if they don't know how to handle the assighment or they can't sit in their seat and do what they are told or supposed to be doing - I go over and pick up the greenticket very quietly and just hand them a yellow ticket. That is, caution kid - you are headed for trouble.

> And the yellow ticket is replaced - if they still don't get their act together - they get a red ticket. It's a signal system - stop immediately. And if they don't stop immediately, then I let them have some time off - I write them a slip and send them down to the alternative room. It'snot a punishment; it'sget your act together. They get their green ticket back - I change their yellow ticket back to green about every 10 minutes if they immediately behave. And I have only given out one red ticket and the child I gave the red ticket to knew that I meant business. I don't know why he knew it - maybe he just knew. He read me loud and clear and straightened up just like that and I was able to get him back to a green ticket in 10 or 15 minutes.

5. Ask for help if you need it. One school has set up a procedure for allowing each teacher to refer up to two misbehaving students to the counselor for daily therapy. All schools provide for backup by the principal in cases of serious misbehavior in the classroom: principal-controlled sanctions include paddling, assigning detention, and as a last resort, expulsion. One school has an "alternative" or "discipline" room where unruly kids can be sent to calm down under adult supervision. Report cards can be used to inform parents of misbehavior as well as failure to achieve.

6. Give positive reinforcement. Praise for good behavior is encouraged continually. One principal supplies teachers with note pads for sending home complimentary remarks. Teachers pin notes on students and tape them on their desks. They post beautiful work. They often quiet classes by saying, "I like the way John is paying attention."

Elements of a controlled learning process--constructed setting, reward structures, allowances for diversity, controlled volume and sources of information, provisions for improvisation and staying in charge--are also applicable to the management of students when they are collectively outside the classroom (i.e., in public). Routines must be established early for fixed settings such as the cafetorium, playground, and assemblies. Procedures are made known to students about how to behave and what will happen if they do not.

Controlling Public Behavior

In public spaces within school buildings, a uniformly high standard of decorum is set by district (and affirmed by individual school) policy. Procedures are established for ordering lines of students and are followed by all teachers: for example,

> Send lunch count to the cafeteria each day by 9:00. Prior to arriving at the cafeteria, arrange the class in the following order: those not buying anything, those buying items to supplement a bought lunch, those buying hamburgers, hot dogs, soup, etc., and those buying a plate lunch. Begin seating students at far south end of the cafetorium. (Cafeteria Procedures, Duncan School, PHISD 1978-79)

Teachers are to sit with their students until "appropriate behavior is demonstrated by all students" (i.e., proper eating manners, proper behavior, and quiet, below normal tones, conversation).

Unlike centrally directed commercial organizations that serve kids this age, say, MacDonalds, schools do not use environmental cues to influence lunchroom behavior. Music, color, targeted light, partitions, small tables--these are never used in PHISD schools. Rather, teachers are called upon to stifle exuberance. This they do mainly by moving their classes through the lunchrooms on a rigid schedule and out onto the playground. When noise surpasses the tolerable level, several days of silence table will be assessed, but this is rarely necessary. Of all the daily activities in our study schools, the timing of lunch is the most tightly coordinated. That is, schedules are posted as to which grade goes first, how much time they have, and so on. Efforts are made to keep younger children segregated from older ones at lunch as on the playground. Ordinarily, the smaller children eat first, on the assumption that they are least able to wait, but each school adjusts the standard pattern to meet its special circumstances. Duncan teachers can see which groups are moving toward the cafeteria, and they merge their groups as convenient, within general guidelines. At Baldy School, the first grade teachers have made an ingenious modification. So that they can arrange the long morning session they want for solid subjects, they take last, instead of 1st grade's normal first, turn at lunch, and they have a formal snack break at mid morning.

Closed corridors in three of our schools permit passage of groups of students out of sight of those in classrooms. Always at Adobe and Duncan, and at lunchtime at the other schools, class groups move in silent lines. When individual students are authorized to move about these buildings, they frequently wear or carry tags showing destination (bathroom or other) and the name of the teacher responsible for the wearer. An alternative to this procedure is to allow students to sign out of the classrooms.

Complementing the tight scheduling of lunch lines and the decorum imposed under lunchroom ceilings is the open air exuberance of the playground. The standard recipe for doing recess is to line up pupils (boys' line, girls' line) for the silent march through public space, to release them where the lawn becomes dirt and allow 30 minutes free play (during which the three or four teachers whose classes share the playground halt fights and unsnag zippers on kids' jackets without losing the rhythm of their own conversation), and finally to align them for the return, quietly over grass, silently through passageways, back to the classroom. The standard recess recipe calls for student participation in setting rules for the free play portion. For example,

> Don't stand on the fence.
> Don't throw dirt.
> Wait your turn on the slide.
> Don't jump out of the swing.
> Dont' hit people.
> Don't throw rocks.
> Don't stand in the swing.
> Don't kick.
> Don't jump off the see saw.
> Don't slide down the poles.
> Play nicely.
> (composed by a 1st grade class, 1979).

By 1st grade, after one year's experience with kindergarten (and possibly nursery school, day care, etc.) children come up with list very much like this without prompting. They have learned what problems (from the viewpoint of class management) are likely to arise: unseemly competition for scarce resources, dissention within the group, and unpredictable behavior, each of them serious to the degree they are likely to attract outsiders' attention. And first graders have learned the appropriate measures for preventing such problems or at least rendering them capable of resolution within the group. For this purpose clearly defined boundaries are indicated, and they are either supplied by the children, or by teachers, in lists similar to that above.

When bad weather prevents use of the standard recess recipe, alternative recipes are available. Where space permits, children may be taken to the gym. Here, however, the need to control noise dictates teacher-organized games. Or children may be released to run on small concrete areas, driveways or patios, though any space without play equipment can become a battleground without constant teacher vigilance. The least desirable setting, but often the only one possible, is the classroom. In this setting, recess is indistinguishable by sound level or activity pattern from study time: students do homework or read. Nevertheless, students expect their "recess," and even if teachers had the resources to expand teaching time on rainy days (We note in the next chapter that teachers generally are hard pressed to prepare lessons for the regularly alloted hours ), students would not accept loss of their break. Recess is more than a break in routine, more than a routine in itself, it is also a resource with which teachers bargain for good behavior, a property jointly owned with students and other teachers, in short, a management problem in its own right. But as a component of the daily routine, recess is a problem only when isolation from classrooms and indoor public spaces is impossible. The accepted recipe for ordering space-appropriate conduct prohibits exuberance within school walls.

In general, students outside the control mechanisms of the classroom must have a legitimate purpose and be able to report it to any adult authority in the hallways. Indeed, it is outside the classroom (where the teacher's authority and control is virtually unquestioned) in the public spaces that order can and does break down. Such spaces provide examples of the limits of control teachers have over students. In public spaces, rules structures are more rigid, always verbalized more, and broken more often. It is as if outside the walls of the classroom the advantage of the teacher is reduced by the sheer numbers of the pupils and loss of setting control. To be sure, in the halls and other public spaces, particular students excel and become known for their behavioral feats.

The problems of control and more importantly the responsibilities teachers feel, were typified to us by a play attended by all the third graders in PHISD. As one fieldworker in analyzing her experience, wrote:

> [Today] I came to understand the emphasis and responsibility of "control" that is placed on teachers. When we [90 kids, 3 teachers, 1 principal and me] arrived at the high school where the play was being presented, and seeing the number of students involved--all those buses full of children. I was aware of a certain degree of uneasiness inside myself. I actually had no responsibility for the students, however. The day before the principal had mentioned they could use another chaperone. When I saw a gap without an adult, I walked with those students. Upon entering the building I suddenly realized that I did not know the faces of the students I was with or their names. We were standing in the lobby with other schools while we were waiting to go up stairs. The students were all excited and asking me questions. I had not realized that even at the third grade level, that the students would be more prone to watching everything around them besides where they were going....All of a sudden I felt a heavy load of responsibility. There had to be some control. Yet, it seemed so unfair because the beauty of youth is to experience something for the first time with little or no restrictions. I found myself abandoning this "idealistic" attitude for a bit more control. Once we were seated, I did not feel it was my responsibility or a proper action on my part as the observer to discipline the students...[The play is boring to all.]...During the play, I began to realize that it was a blessing to be sitting in the balcony as we were the only school up there.

> It made it easier to control the students and to know who belonged where. But, as we left the panic within once again developed. This time it seemed worse because all the students were going in the same direction. I found myself keeping a closer watch over those students who were with me. When the teacher from the other school brought her students thru "my line" it was instant chaos. She did not usher her students thru in an orderly single file line, but instead in one mass. She had about 15 students and I imagined the students from Adobe becoming unknowingly part of her group and ending up at a different school before they realized what had happened. As the line began to get smaller and most of the students were on the bus, [the principal] and [one other teacher] were on the bus giving instructions. The [other two teachers] and I were standing outside the buses. Other than the annoyance of the moving buses, I asked them about how they felt in such a situation. I explained to them how I felt. They both said they too were quite disturbed about the incident with the other teacher. ["probably didn't want to be late for lunch," one said shruggingly]. Both teachers agreed that it was quite a tense situation in controlling so many students. (Fieldnotes, 12/1/78)

Bathrooms and their use present special difficulties for control in all the schools, and are subject to particularly stringent regulations. At three schools portions of these rooms are open to the corridor.[20] The toilet stalls are hidden from public view by a wall that screens visual space but allows theoretically for auditory control. The washbasins are all connected to a single source of water and visible to anyone in the hallway. There are no faucets on the washbasins and the water simply runs a low pressure. This means that female teachers have, within the bounds of moral standards, maximum visual and auditory control over students using these rooms. The elaborateness of their construction is concrete evidence of the special problems they make for elementary schools. When a whole class is escorted to the restroom in a group, as is always done with primary children (at Adobe with all ages), teachers stand at the entrances to guard against disturbances.

At the open plan school some teachers have developed an especially elaborate control ritual. Each restroom, boys' and girls', has five booths. When a teacher brings her boys' and girls' lines to the restroom, she counts the lines off by fives. She admits the first five boys and girls to booths 1-5 in the appropriate rooms. Then she stands watch between the two rooms, and as a booth is vacated she signals its number by holding so many fingers aloft. The boy or girl assigned that number then takes his or her turn, and so it continues through the groups of five until everyone has moved from the bathroom side to a line on the opposite side of the hall for the return trip to the classroom. In spite of this surveillance, violations occur, though infrequently. Children urinate on floors and walls; pencils are flicked and stuck into the acoustical tile above the booths, and papers are stuffed in the bowls. Once as one of us observed a spelling lesson, a cascade of water shot down the corridor from the boys' restroom, an event that pleased the speilers immensely.

## CONCLUDING COMMENT

Particular modes of management and instruction are tied together as a single process running throughout the situational stream that makes up school life. They are grounded in physical structure--traditional classrooms with one teacher and twenty-five to thirty children enclosed in one room--and based on a textbook technology. Techniques of classroom management/instruction are directly relevant to these two features: one adult must both act as managerial authority and administer text knowledge while maintaining situational control. When textbooks, contexted by the traditional classroom structure, became the primary technology utilized in schools, patterns of instruction (and management) were largely delimited and fixed in place. Text knowledge comes in standardized increments laid out in a linear fashion in the form of lessons. Each year students are to be exposed to particular bits of reading, mathematics, science in segmented fashion. Lessons, too, are structured in time to occur in a more or less cyclic pattern. Students know what to expect and what they will receive for compliance with both the management plan and instructional course of action: time and space to themselves, social approval, and other external rewards. Teachers must balance constantly their actions as agents of management seeking to preserve order and agents of the teaching/learning process seeking to motivate students to achieve at maximal levels. Underlying the alliance of these activities is the assumption that institutional order in the presence of the text materials for an assigned period of time will result in learning. It is typified by the often spoken words that "effective management establishes an environment conducive to learning." Stated otherwise, the teacher must control the learning process so that students learn particular ways of behaving and, one hopes, take them to heart, do not challenge them and thus toe the line. In both instructional modes, the larger culture is reproduced. Settings are constructed that include student leaders (teacher helpers), division of labor, monochronic scheduling,[21] task and time differentiation, reward systems that link work (academic) performance with institutional conformity. Given the nature of rewards, teachers grant privileges early in the year, day, lesson period so that they have something to reward or punish with. If such rewards are in scrip, they must be redeemable for something else. Students who are successful individually can get out of work, choose alternative activities, be free to move about, etc. Given the diversity in the classroom, teachers can vary task and the time students have to do the task. Teachers manage the classroom situation by grouping their diverse work force, adjusting time and task, and then pursue the elusive goal of meeting individual needs of students. To do so, they must instruct other students to sit in place, work hard, make no noise, and ignore the remaining 25 or 30 people in the room.

Academic evaluation under these circumstances, as well as evaluation of other normative conduct, becomes difficult. Like their nominal superiors, principals, teachers put great stock in attention to form. Students must be well-behaved and complete their work according to form, or suffer deduction of points. Such a class indicates to the principal, on a cursory glance, that the teacher is in control, and thus a good teacher.

All of the teachers we came to know in PHISD sincerely wanted their students to succeed, and much of what they did was "for" or "in the interest of" the children. Variations in management plans can be viewed in this light. The learning centers of the first to third grades are gradually replaced by batched whole-group instruction. Cooperative tasks decline and competitive tasks increase. Sixth grade teachers, in addition to managing and instructing, must further concern themselves with introducing their charges to the organizational arrangements to come in junior high. By the sixth grade teachers are not supposed to have to flick the lights off or have students place their heads on their desks at the end of lessons or when actions get near to or outside tolerable limits. Sixth graders are supposed to have general classroom rules internalized. Posters need not proclaim what should be done. When this is not the case, teachers must perform remedial work, almost always both in terms of general classroom behavior and academic performance, for as teachers know, those whose motivation and interest in academic fare is low and performance weak are often behavior problems. Given situations where the performers are not ready to go on, the ideal would be to prolong the socialization process, but the bureaucratic organization of schooling precludes such an arrangement.

Given a control structure of one adult to approximately thirty children, self-contained classrooms are a practical container. Teachers must get to know their charges, in particular, the limits of their compliance; students must become familiar with procedure and learn teachers' tolerance limits. Both setting, the self-contained classroom, and reciprocal familiarity result in order; change one and order becomes more tenuous. Substitute teachers may know the instructional materials, but they often do not know the "rules." Public places both within the school and without make supervision more difficult. Teachers compensate with more rules, more surveillance. When, for example, the possibility arises for several sets of children to intermingle, there must be safeguards to ensure that every child is the responsibility of one specific adult. This is probably the single most important reason for keeping grade levels separated in corridors, cafetoriums, and playgrounds. Teachers at a grade level work closely enough together to know most of the children in that grade level, and this familiarity permits two teachers to keep watch over as many as 100 children on a playground--but only when there are not outsiders present. When two or more grade levels appear on the playground at the same time, as occasionally happens, they must be kept apart for efficient surveillance, teachers say. To do so, teachers create "personal places" within the public playground space; they portion out the playground and tell their charges to stay within the newly created boundaries. Maintaining control becomes even more difficult when individual students leave the teachers' sensory range: hence tight controls over restrooms and the hall passes/identification markers (in one form or another) that students wear/carry.

Control of the learning process in schools is not just an efficient way of delivering curriculum, it is a critical part of the organized course of study. Though control is sometimes described as the "hidden curriculum," there is really nothing hidden about it at all; it is simply taken for granted. The stable, and taken-for-granted, features of bureaucracy and craft intermingle in the everyday work of teachers and form the hidden curriculum.[22] One can see the pervasive tension between bureaucracy and craft in schools' scrupulous compliance with regulations setting required days and hours of instruction--compliance that contrasts with rather loose interpretation of what instruction shall consist of. One can see it in the fact that students whose performance outstrips the class are never accelerated; they are given enrichment. One hears it in complaints about children who enter PHISD from private schools, or even transfer within the system from the magnet school. These children are said to lack "listening skills"; they respond poorly to mass instruction and rebel at routine tasks. To facilitate control and a particular organizational shape, isolated buildings, strict schedules, texts, self-contained classrooms are provided, and teachers are expected to function first as managers, secondly as teachers.

## CHAPTER VIII

## FOOTNOTES

1. The title phrase is attributed to Robert Frost.

2. PHISD teachers use consultants to help them han-le this problem. Consultants are used to obtain extra materials--especially for those children who are ahead. Similarly, they are asked to find materials on subjects that the children may be interested in, but which are not given sufficient coverage in the standard text.

3. Jackson, in describing life in classrooms makes a similar observation:

> In their efforts to make their classrooms more homelike, elementary school teachers often spend considerable time fussing with the room's decorations. Bulletin boards are changed, new pictures are hung, and the seating arrangement is altered from circles to rows and back again. But these are surface adjustments at best, resembling the work of the inspired housewife who rearranges the living room furniture and changes the color of the drapes in order to make the room more "interesting." School bulletin boards may be changed but they are never discarded, the seats may be rearranged but thirty of them are there to stay, the teacher's desk may have a new plant on it but there it sits, as ubiquitous as the roll-down maps, the olive drab wastebasket, and the pencil sharpener on the window ledge. Jackson, 1968:6-7.

4. See Jackson (1968) on this point.

5. An authoritative statement of this rule is quoted in English Language Arts Curriculum, PHISD, 1974. According to Lawrence Carrillo, in "Reading Comprehension Grade Expectations for Different IQ's and Grade Placements," normal expectation for a 5th grade with IQ range 75-155, for example, would be exactly that found in PHISD, grade 2 to grade 11. Carrillo, 1963.

6. See Jackson (1968:4-5).

7. An earlier version of the guidelines runs ten pages and contains 113 axioms, adages, and truisms covering such topics as disciplinary "generalizations," teacher orientation, planning, human relations, motivation and punishment. For example,

Teacher Orientation

1) Classroom discipline tends to be good or bad depending upon the teacher's skill in teaching, his personal impact, and upon the physical environment under which the school and class operate.

2) The effective teacher recognizes that most well-disciplined classrooms are those which have a limited number of rules but ones which make sense to students and teacher alike.

3) Teachers should recognize the fact that general misconduct is a result and not a cause.

4) The effective teacher realizes that good discipline is based on teacher attitude and interest in the aims and work of the school.

5) The effective teacher gives forthright attention to desirable standards of conduct.

6) The effective teacher readily recognizes the fact that students know that teachers are human, do not know everything, do make mistakes, and keeps on an even keel by "not taking himself too seriously."

7) The perceptive teacher is aware that interests, abilities, and achievement vary tremendously within each class.

8) The effective teacher leaves no doubt in the thought processes of students as to what is expected of them.

9) The effective teacher knows how to achieve a good balance between kindness and firmness.

10) The alert teacher realizes that peer-group pressure is much more effective in imposing standards of conduct than adult-imposed pressure.

11) The effective teacher recognizes that nagging often results from insistence on unnecessarily high standards of student behavior or from poor organization of classes.

12) The teacher knowledgeable in child growth and development will recognize patterns which would otherwise be considered behavior problems.

13) The perceptive teacher recognizes that there are children with problems and problem children.

T.O., PHISD, #'s 1-13.

8. Approximately nine years ago, PHISD used a non-letter grading system which involved parent conferences. We are told that parents did not like the system, that they wanted their children to bring home report cards with the grades recorded manually just like those they received when they were children. As a result, PHISD changed back to the old system. For the past two school years report cards were issued every six weeks; prior to that time, and beginning again in the fall of 1980, cards will be issued every nine weeks. The grades for "basic" subject areas are in letter form, but other areas such as art are rated as "satisfactory," "excellent," "needs improvement," etc.

9. This is possible partially because these buildings do not use bells to mark the divisions of the day. They have small clocks situated throughout the building, but no central system.

10. See for example, Good and Brophy, 1973:162.

11. One might argue, as Hall (1977) does, that all places and situations are conducive to learning. The critical cortical question is always "learning what?"

12. It should be noted that the rationality of the plan breaks down under the press of 25-30 children of unequal skills working through the areas, and under the press of doing whole group instruction. In the first case, area 2 spills into 3 as faster children finish 3 spill into 4. The teacher must do more than instruct, she must monitor behavior, check problems, etc. In the case of whole group instruction, the arrangement can be used as is, or must be broken down and re-assembled (which is in some classes often done, while in others infrequently done).

13. Bluntly, "the business of instruction is largely the business of inducing students to behave in ways that are assumed to affect learning" (Schlechty, 1976:70-71). Aspects of such behavior have been boiled down by Tanaka (1979) who recommends they be mounted as follows:

CLASSROOM RULES

approx. 2 ft.

approx. 2ft.

*CLASSROOM RULES*

1. STAY SEATED
2. RAISE HAND
3. BE QUIET
4. WORK HARD
5. IGNORE OTHERS

14. For a similar view, see Berkeley's (1978) analysis of six kindergarten classrooms in Baltimore. Berkeley indicated that the percent of time devoted to precedural tasks such as lining up ranged from 33.1 to 60.5% of available school time, while cognitive activities occupied 17.8 to 36.9%.

15. Strengthening the need to concentrate on establishing routine in the first days is the impossibility in some classrooms of starting regular instruction. In many cases, before children can be grouped for learning, level of readiness must be determined. Diagnostic testing, therefore, is a major task for the first week. Each teacher tests reading skills, using district supplied or publisher furnished tests. The time devoted to testing is, of course, greatest at first grade and in schools with high student turnover. As in so many matters, the ideal situation occurs in 6th grade at the most stable school. Here testing the first week is a minor matter. Using ratings by the previous year's teacher, the sixth grade teachers at Baldy know about where each child belongs, and--rare luxury--they start teaching the first day.

16. Both teachers and principals believe that motivation begins at home. They do not find it surprising that achievement scores at Baldy are high, on the average, and at Adobe, low. The only surprise is when scores don't match neighborhood income:

> Principal: It is...and then, you know, I just don't believe that kids read at home, now some people don't agree with me but I think parents are so busy now days, life is just living too quickly or whatever and I ......you know, you'd think in a neighborhood like ours that these children have all these books at home and they go home every day and sit down to a routine of reading and because mother is too busy making dinner or whatever, because she has been working all day. But we think that....you know, we sit here and we think....these upper and middle class people and all, they must be loaded with books....but you know, mama doesn't read and daddy doesn't read so of course the kids aren't going to read.

Teachers' tasks are made much easier when the value of reading is legitimized in the family unit. When this is the case, they can spend more time in instruction since they need not manage nor continually justify activity. In addition, the children want to read. Conversely, when children do not see the value of reading and do not want to, teachers are forced into being managers: making a fit between materials and students, motivating unwilling students, etc.

17. Jackson, 1968:28.

18. Information control of content and pace breaks down when a teacher is confronted with a brilliant talented and motivated student. Occurences such as these, while not frequent, are not infrequent. When this happens, teachers must (usually with help from consultants) devise an individual management plan for the student and work with him or her personally. In this case, as in the case of "slow

learners," difference from the expected poses a problem for and threat to the whole plan of batched instruction. Practically, it means that students who are that different get individual attention from staff.

19. Especially when the TV cannot provide a program for the time to fill, improvisation requires having provisions--routines, special goodies, games--that inexperienced, beginning teachers and especially substitute teachers do not have.

20. The fourth school, Carmine, was built prior to the use of this design. In addition, it was once a K-12 school so that the restrooms resemble what adults are used to seeing in public and semi-public places.

21. See Hall, 1977.

22. Fischer (1977) notes that the Courts consider the educative consequences of both formal and hidden curriculum, which is seen to embody "all educative experiences within the school not explicitly included in the official or overt curriculum. Thus, to the extent that school rules and regulations or the physical or social environmrnt influence what students learn, they are part of the 'hidden curriculum'." (Fischer, 1977:253).

# CHAPTER IX

## THE LIVING CURRICULUM: *ABEUNT STUDIA IN MORES*[1]

> The old men took us for walks, and taught us the use of plants and how to collect them. The people pointed out that water is essential to life and taught us what to do out in the desert when we became so dry and thirsty that we could neither spit nor swallow. By the time I was six, therefore, I had learned to find my way about the mesa, to avoid graves, shrines, and harmful plants, to size up people, and to watch out for witches.
> Don, Hopi Sun Chief[2]

As Don points out, the curriculum of life is a process of finding one's way, understanding people, accepting the desirability of living up to knowing their expectations, the everyday rituals and recipes and those one uses in crisis. Subjects range from survival to social skills and values such as recognizing good and evil, people and places to be venerated, those that should be shunned, in short what to do and not to do. The lessons of curriculum vitae are grounded in everyday experiences. For schools this includes not only a formal curriculum, but also the organizational form, the rules, those aspects taken for granted and thought of as normal, ordinary, and unexceptional. Formal curriculum most often reproduces aspects of culture about which there is a broad consensus. Implicit, then, is a concentration on the past rather than current events because there is more likely a consensual version of the past encoded in a useable way. Past events, too, appear as "facts," and their value content is less clear than that of many current events, which may still be embroiled in controversey. But the living curriculum is more than texts, guidelines for their use, standardized tests, etc., it is found in the everyday situational stream that produces and reproduces cultural aspects relevant to the taken-for-granted shape of the organization. That is, a significant part of cultural reproduction is the organization itself, complete with expectations and recipe guides. Schools present a form of organization that conveys to all participants expectations and recipes for what administrators, teachers and students should act like, look like, and think about.

Curriculum can be seen as that part of the total culture selected for reproduction in schools and realized in the experience of life in schools; hence, "the living curriculum." Of this total experience, a minor portion is made explicit in guides and texts and is open to discussion and change; the major portion, however, is implicit, and taken for granted. It consists of expectations of and limitations on schools and is incorporated in such organizational arrangements as teacher controlled classrooms and nationally distributed, state provided texts. Whereas the implicit curriculum emanates from the taken for granted, and thus is so obvious that it appears "hidden" in features of everyday organizational life, the formal curriculum is abstracted from everyday life. As noted earlier, they also avoid any topic that might arouse controversy, and in this effort they are reinforced by the vigilance of community members. In PHISD, for example, the demand for return to basics seems less a demand for better spelling, for everybody agrees kids should be able to spell, than a protest against teaching such topics as "sex" and "values" and against permitting such departures from teacher controlled instruction as small group sessions led by counselors. Both implicit and explicit curriculums simplify the culture they reproduce, just as situations are simplifications of society, for the purpose of schools is, after all, to select and transmit those elements of the culture deemed suitable for children and worthy of transmitting. Together they constitute a way of making sense of the world, a way of saying, "These are the parts of our world we must understand" and, by implication, "The rest we accept without examination; we expect everyone to know these things without special tutoring." Presented with a science lesson, for example, students are expected to understand the facts without questioning their veracity and to master them, which means assign proper meanings and comply with appropriate recipes for action. Presented with a series of "facts" about playground behavior in rule form, students are expected to understand them without challenge to their legitimacy and master them; that is, implement appropriate recipes for action. Being able to demonstrate that one knows that "in 1492 Columbus sailed the blue," is relevant only in situations which call for such demonstrations; likewise for demonstrating the recipe for seesaw etiquette. That is, underlying both is a similar structure of learning the facts and the rules, the situations in which they are relevant, and the appropriate recipes for action. Thus, the living curriculum consists of situationally relevant recipes for action.

To view management/instruction, the film of classroom events was stopped in order to look at selected frames, and a similar procedure will be followed with curriculum, remembering throughout that the two are merely analytically separate aspects on one process. Each may be seen as the primary conveyor of one of the axial norms of schooling: equity in management/instruction; cultural reproduction in the living curriculum.

## CURRICULUM MATERIALS

### Texts and Guides, Concepts and Skills

Formal curriculum is described in documents, always in semiephemeral form, printed in offset or mimeographed and spiral bound, and distributed to schools by state and district curriculum offices. In practice, the content of curriculum is largely prescribed by textbooks. As noted earlier, in Texas the state education agency issues a list of approved texts from which school districts may adopt. PHISD practice is to adopt five reading texts from each elementary grade, one or two math texts, and one each for science, health, social studies, and language. Parents, teachers, and citizens may indicate preferences, but final choice rests with a committee of the Board. From the texts adopted by the district, individual schools may choose the books their teachers prefer. Not every teacher at a grade level in one building is required to use the first choice text. Generally, though, one text is used for most students, and the others for students with special needs. Beyond approving texts from which districts may choose, the state also designates concepts and skills to be taught at each grade level and that correspond to the texts available.

Also used in PHISD are curriculum guides prepared by local teachers and consultants, whose experience and expertise are known and recognized in the District. The guides, covering all academic subjects as well as P.E., music and art, are largely recipes for and lists of suggested activities and materials to supplement texts; PHISD teachers keep copies of these in their classroom file cabinets and sometimes refer to them when making up their weekly lesson plans. One PHISD principal attempted unsuccessfully to require specific reference to the guides in lesson plans.

How one of these guides was developed was described for us by a teacher who, with 5 fellow students at a nearby state college, wrote the original PHISD kindergarten curriculum:

> Teacher: At the time the first curriculum was written, I was still working on my master's, even though I had years of kindergarten teaching experience. (Her teaching was in private school. Texas public schools introduced kindergarten only in the 1970s.) The six of us (in the university kindergarten program) were all experienced teacher, but they told us we had to find a school to do student teaching in. One of the ladies said, "Well, I've already got a class in Prairie Heights and you can all come to my class." Our professor said this is rather ridiculous for you all to be doing student teaching, but that is the rule, and therefore I'm going to let you work on a pretend curriculum for kindergarten. One girl took language, one took gross motor, art, all the different areas, and we wrote it up, and somehow or other is found its way into Prairie Heights, and that was their curriculum. Which (the Prairie Heights teacher) got the credit for. That was the curriculum to start out with, and then every year they have changed it, usually trying to get something that's not so bulky.... not too detailed. (The 1979 version) tells the things we are striving for in kindergarten, to present the child with, that we think will give a very rounded child....It's getting more practical... more useful....not so detailed.

Normally, however, PHISD curriculum guides are developed by "writing teams" of teacher and consultants, sometimes using materials provided by the state education agency. Typical of the districts expection for use of these guides is that expressed in the introduction to English Language Arts Curriculum Guide,

> This guide is a representation of the philosophy of the school district as it relates to language arts instruction to which each teacher should feel a commitment to follow. It is a broad outline with objectives clearly stated and with ample suggestions for materials and activities for implementing the achievement of those objectives which should result in individualized instruction. Each teacher will consider this guide as a statement of minimum materials and will exercise ingenuity and initiative in amplifying it to offer the maximum challenge to each child.

This guide, 248 pages in length, covers skill and concept development for children from K-6, activities to undertake, ways to evaluate such activities including charts and recipes for ascertaining the "grade level of a book," and the "reading comprehension grade expectations for different IQ's and grade placements." This guide, like the ones for other subjects, is a combination of excerpts from already published work (representing state-of-the-art) and individual teacher contributions built around the incremental teaching of age and grade segmented knowledge based on state sanctioned concepts and skills. While these guides are used for planning and as resources for expanding on basic work, the basic work, the everyday formal curriculum, is the textbook:

> Teacher: Well curriculum....all curriculum is determined by district policy. When we teach math, we have a math book that we follow and that's it. You know, how we teach it is up to us, what we teach is up to the district.

In books, the potential for choice is narrow. Publishers offer only what they believe will sell in volume nationwide. From this offering Texas state committees choose several books in each subject at each grade level as approved texts, PHISD adopts some of these, from which individual schools can choose two or three readers and one book in each of the other school subjects at each grade level. Books are changed periodically about every six or seven years.[3] Once in the classroom, the books--or parts of them--are used heavily by teachers as the basis for curriculum instruction. Teachers often apologize for being "book-bound": professional ideals call for teacher-created materials to fit the needs of particular classes and even of individual students. In practice this ideal is never approached. With five or six subject lessons to prepare every day and three, perhaps four, different reading levels, most teachers do well to get commercially prepared stencils run off and text assignments covered. But as we note in a later section because the adopted texts provide more material than can be covered, teachers have a degree of choice about how they will use the standard materials.

## Parent and Student Input

Parents, if they are to influence curriculum at all, must do so by political action at the district level or higher. In Prairie Heights, state approved textbooks being considered for local adoption are publicly displayed, and citizens are invited to hear publishers promote their products before the PHISD Central Textbook Committee, whose chairman is the superintendent. This committee then recommends adoptions to the board. The district has regular procedures, too, for removing objectionable materials from classrooms: earlier chapters alluded to the discarding of philosophy texts for gifted children and parent success in having the school board ban closed circuit TV transmission of programs that dealt with making moral choices, although use of the programs was stoutly defended by PHISD teachers.[4] Parent efforts apparently are more successful in stopping instruction about matters they consider inappropriate than in suggesting new materials or subjects they think would particularly fit their children's interests. When asked whether they are offered suggestions for teaching units by parents, teachers react with genuine surprise:

> Parent input? No. As far as what? Curriculum? No, we are always open to listen to individuals and we encourage parent conferences and certainly if a parent says something about their child having difficulty, let's say in spelling, an area of spelling or an area of math or something like this, definitely I will give him ideas to utilize at home to reinforce and all, but as far as parents being able to tell me what they feel should be taught in the classroom.... that is discouraged because I think you would have 33 different ideas of what is important in the classroom.

Even less is there direct input of student preferences into the basic curriculum:

> Researcher: Have you ever noticed at this school that there is some input from students in the choices made about curriculum?
>
> Teacher: No, not really. I haven't noticed that, and I haven't implemented anything like that either. In class really, I choose what is studied, generally. In fact, I can't think of an exception off hand.

It appears that when teachers talk about formal curriculum, they mean the subjects they teach, English, math, science, social studies. For teachers and for schools, depending as they do on state funds, state adopted texts, and state mandated testing, this curriculum is essentially given. Only under unusual circumstances when problems arise is curriculum altered. For example, some curricular innovation has occurred at Carmine, the magnet school, in response to Federal court orders. Here regular curriculum is augmented by Spanish as well as "extra" curriculum activities that draw volunteers. Here, too, there is an additional complement of staff to deliver the curriculum. Another example occurred at Adobe where the large proportion of non-reading students has led to modifications of curriculum. In 1979, regular reading texts were replaced for many primary students by an individualized reading program based upon the children's own experiences and designed to interest them in learning to read. This expensive program was cancelled for lack of funding after one semester, but the need persisted. At first alone and then with school support, one primary teacher initiated her own special program for the many 1st grade children who lack the maturity or experience to cope with regular reading readiness materials. At Adobe too, because of the number of students who are below grade level in reading and math, more intensive curricular instruction and drill was instituted, at the cost of slighting art and social studies somewhat. "What good is it to try and teach them geography when they can't even read?", the principal explained. Finally, of course, regular recipes exist for modifying curriculum to suit carefully defined and documented special cases: Plan A students certified through ARD process and children selected for the Talented and Gifted classes.[5] These exceptions probe the general rule that unless the problem is overwhelming, schools go along with the prescribed curriculum.

## Teacher Editing of Formal Curriculum

In presenting text materials teachers have some discretion as to what they teach. This is because many of the texts have more materials in them than can be covered. Selective editing of the text through teaching is a collective grade level decision, or when departmentalization has occurred the teacher responsible for the subject at hand makes the decision.

Generally, texts and materials for mathematics and spelling are considered fixed while social studies and science are viewed as areas where teachers can exercise discretion:

> Teacher: Spelling I cannot change, nor would I, and mathematics is programmed. In social studies, I have a choice of texts I can use and I have a choice of things I can emphasize in the text. For example, I could emphasize the pre-Revolutionary War era, or the post-Revolutionary War era. Now I've chosen, myself, to give a smattering of it all, rather than emphasizing one. That's an example of my choice in social studies. Reading is another area where I have a choice. We have basal texts and we have those texts which have been used in the past but are no longer considered current, but we still may use them. In my particular case, I'm using a smattering. I'm using some basal texts as well as some of the texts that were in adoption a long time ago, so that I have some choice there, over what they read, basal as well as supplementary.
>
> In science and health there is a great deal of latitude. Now the district requirement is that we spend an equal amount of time on each, say three weeks in science and three in health each six-week period. But I will do six weeks in one, then six in the other because I think it is too hard to fluctuate in a three week time frame. In science we cannot cover the entire book so I choose various things we will study--oceanography instead of planets. Same thing in health, we might study the circulatory system or the senses rather than let's say, the skin or some of the other subjects that are given.

In addition, teachers can supplement a text which, for one reason or another they dislike or think is weak:

> Teacher: The English book, I think is extremely weak, so what I do, I have them write compositions and I correct them myself, which takes an immense amount of time, and I'm hoping that they get their grammar in a practical way that they are missing in the book itself. There's just very little grammatical emphasis in the book itself and very few exercises. I just think its extremely poor and that's why I emphasize the creative writing myself.
>
> Researcher: Um hum, and that option is open to you and most other teachers?

Teacher: Well, I've taken that option. The other teachers feel like I do that the book is weak, though, I'm sure that some of them are supplementing it with something else.

Teachers depending upon their evaluation of a book may alter formal curriculum; in addition, teacher emphasis on one or a few acres within subject matter alters what is formally provided. In this manner teachers can reduce the discrepancy between what is formally provided and what they believe should be presented to students.

Teacher: You can take a week (in the summer) and have them ready for the following year. You laminate them and all and they will last anywhere from....they should last at least five to ten years. I am using things that I started with years ago, you see, that I am still utilizing because they are current and they were made from children's interests and surprisingly enough it has not changed over the years.

Popular culture is used by teachers in several different ways depending upon the grade level. In sixth, for example, teachers may feel that students need to learn about and talk about current events:

> At 8:45 a.m. Carol (the 6th grade teacher) announces that reading time is to begin. The kids are still too excited to read so she quickly switches to discussing the news. She tells me later that the 6th grade teachers try to get a little adult conversation in each day. Many kids seem to be totally unaware of and have never heard anyone discuss national affairs or local news. Events brought up for talk today are the Texas-Oklahoma (upcoming) football game; State Fair (now going on); the Miracle Worker (a movie) on TV last night; and two young boys who lighted a bottle of gasoline and nearly killed themselves.

In the earlier grades, teachers are much less likely to talk about and utilize current popular culture; they are, however, more likely to utilize cartoon characters and mythic figures to aid them in presenting formal curriculum:

> Right now Superman is big, so we (teacher and class) got together and discussed, I wanted to design a game that would reinforce division facts and so we named our game, instead

> of Superman, we called it Supermouth. But they came up with what were your hazard cards like Kryptonite cards because they had the information that I didn't have and they gave it to me and then the good luck cards of course were the super hero cards because they know the terminology, they watch the cartoons which I don't and things like this and then I take their input and then I design games and centers around it in this sense but it is always reinforcing a basic skill that I am teaching as a part of a subject matter and its curriculum.

Teachers believe learning should be relevant, enduring and fun. Whereas television producers have large budgets to stage a 30 minute production, teachers have meager resources and must face their audience both as instructor and manager. To make formal curriculum more fun, teachers introduce aspects of popular culture such as games. To make it more relevant, they attempt to introduce events that students are confronting in their everyday lives. In this respect, however, they are restricted in discussions of values and choices. Thus, they can only discuss popular culture which is seen as non-value oriented. Within the context of social studies, it may be reasonable to discuss the presidential elections, but within a health unit it is not reasonable to discuss reproduction. In any case, it becomes expedient to use acceptable popular culture such as the characters from Peanuts or cartoon characters. Basically, teachers use popular culture to enrich the formal curriculum and make it dynamic, or as one teacher told us, "you have to make it fit into their lives, you have to make it come alive."

## Teacher Sharing and Coordination

While textbooks provide the overall temporal shape for curriculum and state mandated minutes, films, worksheets, curriculum guides, and teacher generated units provide additional continuity. Teachers share their craft materials with each other, both those focused on student control or management/instruction and those focused on subject matter. This is in part how new teachers are introduced to and adopt established procedures and materials;

> Teacher: I had taught health before Ms. Bishop came and I already had the whole unit laid out in terms of films to order. In fact, I can show you what I am talking about (shows researcher the unit). When she came, she began teaching health, and I gave her this (material). She uses a great deal of my work. See here is the list of filmstrips and movie films that are available for these chapters that tie in. And there are quite a few worksheets that I have already made out. Then I simply ask her if she wants them and if she does then I let her look them over and she can either revise them or say that these are good, we'll just use these.

Sharing materials, however, is not done just with new teachers. Grade level teachers at the same school most often share materials and thereby produce a common grade level production:

> Teacher: Basically, we share everything and it is really neat. Like this was National Metric Week and I had nothing on metrics as far as meter tape or anything that the kids could make or do. Well, Ellen (another teacher) had all this stuff so she ran it off for everybody and we are beginning a food unit in science this week. I had a huge unit on food that we ran off for everybody, so we just share everything and that makes it very easy.

Sharing between teachers who teach at different schools on an informal basis appears infrequently. Curriculum guides, discussed above, are an attempt to formalize district-wide sharing with the additional effect of standardizing teacher materials. Principals when they talk with other building principals can find out about school-wide programs and their benefits. For example, the Silent Reading Program, where students and faculty begin the school day with twenty minutes of reading, that was initiated at Duncan school one year and spread to Baldy school through informal principal interaction. For teachers, PHISD sponsors district-wide workshops where teachers can learn from each other and share materials for study, instructional games, etc. While some sharing of materials between grade levels within the same school does occur, it is infrequent and most often involves the need for materials for single students as might be expected given the segmentation of concepts and text materials by grade level. Finally, teacher sharing can and does occur across districts through workshops and when teachers return to universities during the summer months. Through the sharing of materials, teachers make a collective input into the curriculum of the school. Shared recipes are circulated, creating a common, but crafted, culture to be presented to students.

## REPRODUCING ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Compared to the multitude of university courses, institutes, research reports, state agencies, district offices, and committee meetings devoted to formal curriculum, the academic and practical discussion of organizational context seems sparse. Rarely do teachers speculate about the manner in which they teach children to live in and think about themselves and others in a society of organizations. More often than as a process of organizing the mind, it appears that teachers visualize learning as absorption of material. For PHISD elementary teachers, at least, this view is consonant with the dominant form of curriculum organization that is, itself, consonant with the organizational structure of schooling. Broad areas such as language arts, social studies, mathematics, science and health, and fine arts are official areas of study delineated by state agency and district policy; for these, resources and time are provided. Within this organization, however, teachers, resource and time bound, adjust by presenting separate subjects found in separate textbooks taught at discrete times throughout the school year. Other modes for creating and organizing situations for learning can be found within the overall separate subjects format, but these additional modes, for example fieldtrips, are legitimated in terms of the separate subjects and text based organization. PHISD elementary teachers, even though they desire the best for the children, even though they ideologically represent a range of beliefs about curriculum organization, must operate within the larger dominant organizational structure and the social reality it creates and sustains. Whether child centered, experience oriented, or concept based in curricular ideology, teachers must act within the schooling structure. Resources are provided on the basis of sameness in terms of quantity and virtually in terms of the culture they produce and reproduce. That is, when textbooks are reviewed at the state level, challenges to each book are almost always for a set of similar reasons, e.g., values and racism. Texts that remain thus pass cultural muster in the sense of what they all exclude, although they may differ in their emphasis, number and type of exercises, etc. In this context, curriculum becomes something external to the children that they are to internalize, absorb. Grouping, classroom management, and instructional technologies, and other forms or organizing work are parts of a delivery system designed to create a discrete range of classroom atmospheres "conducive to learning." Teachers must demonstrate that they do some grouping, and the official policy of creating heterogeneous levels of skills in classrooms strips legitimacy from any assertion of sameness; elementary teachers must reconcile the sameness of resource provision and the similarity of cultural reproduction with the variation in knowledge, ability, and motivation of 25-30 children deliberately chosen to reflect differences. They are responsible for maintaining classroom order through management and instruction, an order grounded in and shaped by the ecological facts of self-contained rooms full of 25-30 children and one adult. In the section above, we briefly described the materials of formal curriculum, how teachers have some discretion to alter the formal curriculum and how teachers share materials with each other. In this section, we examine some key aspects of the curriculum of organizational culture, the ways of working, playing and getting along that characterize classroom life.

## Neighborhood Context

> When I used to teach out in the Country School District I felt like I didn't have any supervision on curriculum of anything. I was just handed a book and told to teach. We didn't have any consultants or curriculum guides.... no TV or extras like that that we have here. I feel like here people are more concerned about making it a good experience for the children and boosting their self-concept and, of course, encouraging academics in every way.
>
> 5th grade teacher, PHISD, 1979

Three central features of classrooms in PHISD, emphasis on academic achievement, emphasis on the development of self-condifence and a positive self-concept in the children, and the extras provided to supplement the textbook diet, are reflective of central administration goals and parent desires. The first two, proficiency in manipulating words and numbers and self-confidence, can be viewed as essential for survival in the middle and upper levels of the larger society and its organization as, of course, they are essential to successful accomplishment in the organization of schooling. The extras provided reflect PHISD's desire to give the children the extra edge that parents want their children to have in their quest for success and middle class (or better) rank.

And while the neighborhoods that make up PHISD differ as noted in Chapter II, two common features context classroom interaction and influence curriculum. First, there is relatively little natural interaction between teachers and parents. Most elementary teachers live in neighborhoods other than those where they teach.[6] Responding to this fact, PHISD's superintendent made communication with parents one of the district's goals, encouraging teachers to write notes, at least two a year to parents, especially when the children seem to be having problems learning materials and adjusting to schooling. Principals in line with district emphasis, encourage communication with parents, presuming that they, and not parents, will coordinate the children's learning experiences. The relative lack of face-to-face interaction between parents and teachers affirms the overall credentialling system. Teachers have professional distance in the sense of not personally knowing the families, and parents send their children to certified personnel who are relative strangers. Carried to an extreme, however, the loose integration between life outside the school and in the school can be seen to lead to a decline in the legitimacy of school experiences. Where school life appears irrelevant to everyday experiences it becomes extremely difficult for students to practice their lessons in everyday life.

The second common feature of PHISD neighborhoods is the relative nonpermanence of residents. Neighborhoods differ in their rates of turnover, but even in the most stable neighborhood it is quite unlikely that any parents attended the schools their children attend, and just as unlikely that their children's children will attend school in PHISD. While many children may begin and end their school careers in PHISD, they do not remain untouched by the mobility, the moving in, around, and away of PHISD students and neither does the curriculum of the classroom:

> It was time for TV and the program that the 1st graders were watching was "Clyde the Frog." This TV program seems to be a kind of counseling program; its not about reading or math, in other words, its supplemental. The teacher announced that the program today would be on moving away. She said that Clyde has a friend who was moving and he was very sad. She asked the 1st graders if they had ever moved away or if they had a good friend that moved away. Over half the class raised their hands. Many of them had already moved or had a friend in the neighborhood they live in move away.
>
> Fieldnotes, 1st grade PHISD, 1979

For Prairie Heights children, subject to moving at any time, parents want assurances that lessons mastered in Texas will transfer to California.[7] Therefore the minor dissonances produced when young Texans encounter the nationally standardized, mass produced curriculum are normally greeted with equanimity. When, for instance, Clyde the Frog devoted one of his programs to safe sledding hints, on a balmy winter day in Prairie Heights, those 1st graders who had experienced snow were able to explicate for their classmates who had not. In dialect as in climate, most of these youngsters differ from the standard American target audience, and when material is presented orally--in tapes prepared to accompany texts, for example--misunderstandings occasionally arise. Generally, however, dialect differences are accepted with good humor, as happened when a teacher was attempting to instruct 1st graders on the difference in sound between short "i" and short "e." It was impossible for the teacher to make a distinction between "tint" and "tent" in her dialect, hard as she might try. Many of the children, on the other hand, having moved to Prairie Heights from other states, knew just what sounds were needed and supplied them for the teacher, who enjoyed the joke as much as the children did.

## The Ideal Community of Text

While standardized nationally distributed textbooks prepare students for a community broader than Prairie Heights, they also present an idealized view of the national community. Take for instance, the assumptions embedded in elementary textbooks and other teaching aids. Teachers tell us that first graders, and sometimes even third graders, take the pictures to be the message of a book, until they learn that the text is important and the rest is decoration. First grade readers show a world in which all children are cute and unmarred. Children on poster school buses smile as they ride, and the buses each unaccountably carry a ratio of nine white children to one black. Similarly, friendship groups pictured in reading books frequently include a few blacks among the many whites, but no all black groups and no recognizable Chicanos. In fact, in these books, even in Texas, all school children speak English. When school materials depict the world outside school, it has puzzling features. A typical branch public library, shown in a text illustration, is run by a black male wearing a three-piece suit. A filmstrip shows the family doctor, female, checking tonsils. In the 6th grade TV series, Truly American, almost every featured hero is either black or female: Benjamin Baneker, astronomer, costarred with Ben Franklin; Scott Joplin, opera composer and classically trained musician who occasionally thumped out a few bars of honky tonk piano; Dolly Madison, whose social grace and gutsy determination propelled her husband, James, an older man, to the Presidency. Oddly, though, we don't see males in menial roles. There are no menial roles. Textbook people never sweep up or wash cars for a living.

At least in Prairie Heights, the most optimistic dreams for the futures of all the children are maintained in the face of discouraging facts: some children are crippled; some are floating between East Texas and LA in unsteady families; some just don't have the brains to make it in the management careers that brought their fathers to Prairie Heights. It is as if the textbook world had been invented to silence these threats and document the dream that every child will grow up to fill a role that will reward his best efforts. Nowhere in these books is there a hint of the upheaval that would be required to realize the dream.

## Setting the Pace

In terms of curriculum, grade levels are defined by the materials taught, as are the various skill groups within grade levels. Students are rated as successful or not in relation to their mastery of curriculum, and activities are justified or rejected according to their appropriateness to curriculum. Even the physical form of buildings reflects the expectation that platoons of children will move through the curriculum at a steady pace that changes little through the years. School buildings for the 80s look much like school buildings of the 50s.

Curriculum holds schools in pace and step, grade by grade. All PHISD 1st graders are taught phonics. In one room the children stand and recite the sounds of the alphabet, ....D, Dog, duh...., drawing a straight line down through the air, then up the line and around a circle, big, like an LP record. In another room, boys and girls shout out rhymes; Teacher: "What do I see? Are you looking at ________?' Children's chorus: "ME!" Sixth graders, linked by common textbooks, study nutrition in November. Teachers, linked by a common curriculum guide, have students bring empty food packages from home and ask them to use the label information to plan meals: "A Twinkie contains, in descending order, sugar, flour, water, corn syrup, fat. A 6-oz. can of tomato juice supplies 2% U.S. RDA protein, 30% vitamin C. We need more for lunch." At adobe, 6th graders compare fat content of margarine, peanut butter, and potato chips by placing bits of them on paper toweling and leaving them to soak overnight. "Yechh," they resolve, momentarily, in the morning, eyeing pools of fat. At Carmine using laboratory rates, students make up balanced meals and determine prices by reading the food section of the Morning Times, and plan good and bad diets to try out on the rats.. All 6th graders make nutrition notebooks.

Furthermore, curriculum separates academic properties into age-appropriate parcels. In the beginning, it is incrementally based on what has been previously accomplished. At least in the first three grades, one clearly works from the simpler to the more complex. Later, subtler boundaries must be drawn. Thus, for instance, 5th and 6th grades are divided, the following learn-our-culture-first recipe, much as 11th and 12th grades are. American history and American literature for 5th, European history and literature belong to 6th. Thus, work is apportioned in a routine and acceptable way, and pace and content set.

Because the formal curriculum is taken as given, fixed in state teaching requirements, in teacher education, in teachers' daily practice, it provides a legitimizing basis for differentiation in instructional and management techniques. That is, one begins with a curriculum deeply influenced by national consensus about what pupils should be taught. Pupils' mastery of this knowledge is subject to periodic testing by nationally standardized exams, whose test items are chosen to give a good spread of scores. And with no discussion whatsoever, the curriculum on which the tests are based and which, in turn, prepares for the tests, is taken whole and used to legitimate such standard management and instructional practices as, for example, resource, seatwork, group work, and grouping. In the upper grades, the invidious distinctions grouping practices entail are generally frowned upon. Usually, though, the practice is justified as necessary for instruction. In the lower grades, resource, group work and seatwork are more often seen simply as tools of effective classroom management. Teachers firmly believe that children behave better when lessons are adapted somewhat to their skills. That is the principals' concern when they evaluate teachers according to their success in "individualizing" instruction. It must be emphasized that to "individualize" always means to adjust technology slightly, to give the non-reading child a film strip and cassette tape version of familiar text materials, or to reassign the child to an alternative group. It does not mean to develop materials specifically for the individual pupil. Thus, texts as the raw materials of curriculum set up timetables for performances, because students vary in ability to learn by the prescribed timetable, texts extend differences in achievement and also set up spillover problems for classroom management. Problems result because students who do poorly are often the central "trouble" for teachers. Teachers indicate students who are "gifted" and high achievers are less "trouble" because they can be interested in other activities and, as is frequently said, "have a good self-concept." Poor performers frequently lack basic skill, to respond to instruction and are seen to have poor self-concepts, and also frequently lack interest in the materials conveyed. They form the cadre' of incipient deviants, both instructionally and behaviorally. Being continually off pace, they pose serious threats to the ongoing definition of and working consensus about how work will proceed in the classroom. Thus, academic performance becomes a marker for potential threats to classroom order even before, perhaps, they manifest themselves. To see this defensive reaction cynically would be incorrect; teachers have genuine concern for students, whatever their abilities, but their concerns have been structured so that the processes by which they react to student differences take fairly routine lines. If additional or alternative resources were available for widespread use of instructional technologies other than textbooks, such as, for example, one-to-one coaching, computer assisted instruction, and child-centered materials, then, perhaps, all children would perform better. But for now, to learn in school means fundamentally to learn in a particular way that has at its base mass curriculum delivered in age-graded increments by batched methods from books.

## The Organized Course of Crowding

PHISD elementary classrooms are generally designed so that one adult can be responsible for 20-30 children every school minute from flag ceremony to the stacking of chairs at day's end. PHISD classrooms are jammed with people for approximately six hours a day, and for those people there is no privacy at all. Even the restrooms, except for the stalls themselves, are open to inspection. At school, the girl who has at home her own pink bedroom and pink tile bath and the boy whose mother, exhausted from working two jobs, lets him roam the creeks around their apartment complex, will be confronted constantly with the needs, noise and demands of 20 to 30 other people. They hear their classmates' chalk squeek, their stomachs gurgle. Thinking, even reading are practically impossible. The need for order is palpable.

Teachers are expected to create the necessary order; students, as part of their mastery of curriculum, are expected to learn the rules and toe the lines. The three previous chapters have discussed the elements from which teachers build classroom social order. For example, teachers create a particular division of labor for classroom management: for 1st graders a relatively simple arrangement, say, Helping Hands rotated weekly; for 6th grade an elaborate structure of leaders and supervisors complete with scrip pay. In most cases, the teacher appoints these office holders; occasionally they may be elected. From participation in this classroom mini-bureaucracy, the children are expected to learn responsibility, which includes both a responsible attitude and mastery of the recipes appropriate for carrying out the assigned office. Similarly, the grouping process creates strata of pupils with similar academic skills. Within groups children learn their appropriate modes of conduct and also proper attitudes toward members, nonmembers, and, of greatest importance, about themselves as participants in the group assigned. A third element of classroom order is the series of general rules that teachers must require children to memorize and adjust their behavior to. As Jackson notes,

> Teaching commonly involves talking, and the teacher acts as a gatekeeper who manages the flow of classroom dialogue. When a student wishes to say something during a discussion it is usually the teacher's job to recognize his wish and to invite his comment. When more than one person wishes to enter the discussion or answer a question at the same time (a most common event) it is the teacher who decides who will speak and in what order. Or we might turn the observation around and say that the teacher determines who will not speak, for when a group of students have signalled the desire to enter the dialogue, several of them may be planning to say the same thing. (Jackson, 1968:11-12)

Proverbial expressions of this attitude are "children should be seen and not heard" and should "speak only when spoken to." Representing adult expectations, teachers want to control classroom conversation, but the recipes they expound for compliance vary according to personal predilection and setting construction. At Duncan school, for example, where walls restrict sightlines but not soundwaves, teachers have devised elaborate means for controlling noise. For example, 5th grade teachers have designated noise levels 1-5 for various kinds of activities from seatwork and testing to indoor recess on rainy days. Records are kept of student violations and violators are charged debits. Three debits can be repaid by one "elephant point," which is acquired by doing extra work or "good deeds." Elephant points are general scrip that can be exchanged for goods or privileges (e.g., choosing one's own locker or enjoying a soft drink from the machine in the teachers' lounge) as well as for getting out of debt. At Duncan as elsewhere, the limiting restriction is always that noise must not be audible in adjoining classrooms and corridors. Students at Duncan can explicate for visitors the major provisions of this code and even the subtleties of its situational application. Finally, given a set pace and children of varied knowledge, skill, and motivational levels, arranged for seatwork, group work, individual work in myriad combinations, students are expected to learn patience. As Jackson cogently notes,

> This means that they must be able to disengage, at least temporarily, their feelings from their actions. It also means, of course, that they must be able to re-engage feelings and actions when conditions are appropriate. In other words, students must wait patiently for their turn to come, but when it does they must still be capable of zestful participation. They must accept the fact of not being called on during a group discussion, but they must continue to volunteer.
>
> Thus, the personal quality commonly described as patience--and essential quality when responding to the demands of the classroom--represents a balance, and sometimes a precarious one, between two opposed tendencies. On the one hand is the impulse to act on desire, to blurt out the answer, to push to the front of the line, or to express anger when interrupted.

> On the other hand, is the impulse to give up the desire itself, to stop participating in the discussion, to go without a drink when the line is long, or to abandon an interrupted activity. (Jackson, 1968:18)

Patience becomes the essential virtue of an organizationally attuned student because, as the most malleable element in the classroom amalgam, the student must shape his behavior or have it shaped to fit the press of time and crowds. Because teachers' time is short and students' long, because adults are few and students many, batch methods, requiring pupils' patience, become necessary. Once in place, batch methods teach the organizational recipes appropriate not only in school but also in the larger world of organizations outside: the 9-5, 60 cycle hum, all out in the morning, ease up in the late afternoon; the merging of individual effort in collective work. Moving through school in groups, pupils proceed from relative nurturance in primary classrooms to an approximation of adult forms of work in the whole group pattern prevalent at grade 6 and beyond. Successful graduates, it is presumed, are prepared for the stream of situations they will encounter later on.

### Appearance and Manner

Organizing and presenting situationally appropriate appearances constitutes an important part of the living curriculum. Communications that context, help define or explicitly state appropriate behavior abound in elementary schools. Recipes, both for definition of the situation and for performing within it, can be found in rules for behavior actualized in classrooms and on playgrounds and displayed on school walls. In addition, however, school walls as a communications media help define and context actions that take place within their confines, and like a newspaper, they unfold in sections, each contexting or representing a particular facet of school life and designed for a particular audience. The outside walls are for the taxpayers; visitors see the entrance hall with its masthead. The names of the school board members in the year the school was built are incised in bronze while nearby the national and state flags waft. Chinook pink or hospital green entrance doors with chicken-wire glass and a sign notifying all who pass through to immediately go to the principal's office open onto athletic trophies in a lighted case (all district soccer, grade 3), a portrait of the person for whom the school was named and symbolic representations of the school's totemic animal (e.g., cougars). Snoopy points the way to the cafetorium. Here, between the "in" door and the "out" door displays indicate the holiday or special event being celebrated, for example on one spring day: "Bunny says, Hop on in, eggs today." Inside the lunchroom which doubles as PTA meeting hall, is the biggest wall approximately 18½ meters long and 6½ meters high. This wall is striped off replicating a football field. Each class has a player, a Cowboy, naturally, who gains yards as higher and higher proportions of parents join the PTA. Over the goal posts is a mouthwatering picture of the ice cream and Dr. Pepper party part of the winning class will enjoy. In the hall, each little grade level corridor has a cute frog or turtle saying "Welcome to Grade 3. We have fun." Inside the classrooms, virtually all the wall is text: rules, motivators, sayings of famous persons and mythic figures (e.g., "He that is good for making excuses is seldom good for anything else"--T. Jefferson); moral maxims; pictures of kids; pictures by kids; health charts; behavior charts; management systems; written assignments; cartoons. Classroom walls are for students and so concern formal curriculum teacher's interest beyond formal curriculum (e.g., Presidential election), the kid's interests (e.g., jokes), and rules for behavior in situ--classroom management system and assignments to be done.

School walls, thus, tell a story containing information the occupants want told and information about the school's response to current events or problems. They change seasonally and for special events. For example, an Open House brings a new array of displays that have greater emphasis on student work; at no other time during the school year is the quantity of student school work displayed greater than during Open House. As Open House approaches, students are exhorted to work harder, be neater and do better. Teachers redecorate and talk openly with the children and each other about "putting your best foot forward." Appropriate appearance and manners are stressed when outsiders are present. When an accreditation team is to visit, preparations begin a month in advance. Teachers are asked to stick with the schedule of events, not improvise, and come to work on time. Two days into the visit, the principal's morning PA message rewards and entreats, "Boys and girls, remember we are having visitors today. You were all so good yesterday, I know you can do it again."

Recipes for appropriate action and adumbrated cues exist in every classroom. Externalized and encoded, rules become "the rules" often legitimated and thus bolstered by moral maxims and popular mythic figures both human and humanoid. However, they are but the most visible rules about appropriate appearance; other implicit and explicit rules abound. Dress codes, for example, specify for both students and staff what is the allowable range of propriety; when students see one of their teachers out of dress, setting, character, one or all, it becomes an event to note and talk about. Through activities such as whole group practice of songs for the PTA, students are impressed with the information that public appearances require work, staging, teamwork and practice.

Over the school years, the performances are expected to become more complex, the performers more accomplished and the rules internalized. Stated generally, the more one appears to conform and acts in a conforming manner, the less one is watched, the more one is trusted "outside the walls," and left to discipline one's self. This applies both to institutional conformity and academic achievement. For example, in a 6th grade where the whole class receives math instruction and works on standard assignments, a number of children are capable of more difficult work than is found in the adopted text. These students use an older, more difficult book, work on their own, and check their answers in the teachers answer book kept on a table just for them. Even though at the beginning of each new unit, the students are pulled back into whole-group instruction, they soon are left to work on their own as they out pace the rest. Similarly, students who institutionally conform can be trusted to come and go from the classroom on their own and they can be trusted to show visitors around. They gain good behavior points that will buy them extra recess and gain points for effort in their academic work even though it may be mediocre. The inverse also has generality: those who do not perform up to par academically and institutionally are watched more, cause teachers more problems and are not trusted to monitor themselves. Low achievers slow the pace and throw off the rhythm; non-conformers break style and pose a threat to order. Teachers say that frequently the poor student fails in both of these respects. Off pace, out of step academically, the student becomes uninterested and bored with the common places of institutional life and no longer desires to march to the instructional step and management beat.

## The Organizational Curriculum

In the ordinary course of school life, certain lessons about behaving in organizations are unmistakably imparted. First graders are taught rules of behavior formally as well as implicitly; by 6th grade most students know the rules, and teacher efforts shift toward enforcement and preparation for changing to secondary school patterns. Reduced to essentials, the organizational curriculum consists of five lessons.

First, students learn that the organization legitimately owns six hours a day, 185 days a year of every student's time. In 1st grade, if they have not already done so at nursery school, students learn to arrive and leave on time. They learn that activities are segmented by time: one does not read on the playground or play during reading. Time arrangements are subject to change, but normally this is done at the teacher's or the principal's discretion, not the children's. By 6th grade students know these things and have, of course, become adept at maneuvering within the shadowy boundary regions of the rules. The lessons have been so thoroughly accepted that taking time off to travel abroad with one's parents is considered questionable behavior. With the introduction of departmentalized instruction at grade 6, students begin to fall into the rigidly defined time slots more typical of high school. While there may be some leeway for negotiating about time within the homeroom group, more and more by 6th grade, the schedule has become virtually inviolable.

Secondly, within the time the school owns, the school may designate which activities are allowed or required. Not only must students complete the formal curriculum, but to assert the right to study subjects not offered by the school on school time is unthinkable. When students make choices of activities, more often than not they choose from a list provided by the teacher.

Third, it is the prerogative of the organization to define satisfactory performance. The organization is active and responsible for its output, teaching. The student, by contrast, is relatively passive, responsible for putting in time, staying within assigned behavior limits, and putting forth reasonable effort to complete assigned tasks. Achievement is normally defined in terms of external standards and/or other students' performances; almost never is achievement judged by the student's own standards. Even though schooling is a collective activity, each student is judged by what is defined as his or her individual product. Beginning in 1st grade, therefore, and continuing unabated at 6th, runs a refrain to every lesson, "Write your name at the top of the page." Relatively speaking, cooperative effort is encouraged in the early years, in reading circles and learning centers, but by 6th grade it has been subordinated to individual competitive effort, responding to whole group instruction. At this level cooperation in mastery of formal curriculum is frequently viewed as cheating.

Fourth, while at school, students, as well as teachers, are required to remain in character. First graders learning to be students are taught such time honored rudiments as taking turns, asking permission, sitting in place, ignoring fellow students and other phenomena (helicopters outside the window, for example) defined by the school as nonessential to the mastery of subject matter. They learn the complex technique of receiving whole group instruction, a recipe that in itself requires finely tuned social responses, keen judgement in discriminating between the expressed implied expectations of the teacher, and, when well done, a balance of expressiveness and control that supervisors of adults seldom see. And beginning in 1st grade, students learn the everyday dress and speech patterns appropriate to the student role, the proper degree of informality, the special times and places for more polished performances. They begin to pick up such details as color cues to value: gold and silver stars are first rate, blue and purple nearly as good, but red stars and checks have bad connotations. By 6th grade, stepping out of character, like other misreadings of the script, is presumed to be conscious, if not deliverate except, of course, for those who are labeled as "slow learners" for whom allowances are made. For by 6th grade crowding is worse, time is more pressing, and standards for behavior in groups that made the learning process more pleasant in early grades must be internalized just to make it possible at 6th. The recognition of the need for nurturance, the emphasis on meeting individual needs that characterize primary grades are less noticeable, then at 6th, when the emphasis shifts to sorting on the basis of individual performance in what has become more and more formally, the student role.

Finally, fifth, students learn that the teacher represents the organization and acts for it in enforcing student compliance with its/her demands. Whereas for the 1st grader, the authority of the teacher is personal, 6th graders, as they develop a sense of themselves as separate individuals, also develop a sense of the school as a separate organization larger than themselves, larger than just the teacher and the principal, a legitimate institution in itself. For people the age of 6th graders, schooling is the work they do and students are who they are.

Learning to make one's way through the labyrinth of organizational society requires knowledge of situationally appropriate recipes and, in addition, the ability to organize and present an appropriate performance. Curriculum, explicit and implicit, presents students with a particular set of situations and recipes appropriate for guiding action in those situations. Though participants naturally have to select certain aspects of the total school situation for conscious attention--in general, the formal curriculum--every situation is an occasion for learning. In practice, then, situational lessons can vary as to their clarity, their applicability to individuals or groups, their authorship, that is, under whose auspices the situation and its lessons were socially constructed, and their various other characteristics. Nevertheless, schools exist to deliver socially constructed situations in which clear lessons are provided for whole groups of students; that is, to provide appropriate and predictably successful recipes for action. Teachers present and represent, produce and reproduce key aspects of culture: how to make one's way around the organizational mesas; how people are sized up and performances judged; how the time-space system and the stratification and power systems are organized; what is to be venerated, what shunned; what is to be taken for granted; and what is routinely problematic. Teachers teach these lessons through situations they can only partially construct, and even their constructions must conform to conventions of craft as well as to district and state policies. For teachers, texts and guides, concepts and ways to assess skills are provided as materials and recipes to proceed with in an organizationally constructed situation of one teacher and 25-30 students of varying knowledge, ability and motivations. Teachers as a group do not disagree with the organizationally given choice of concepts and skills to be taught, and as a group they generally do not question but largely take for granted the structure of the organization which both provides the means of teaching and legitimately collects the students. The stream of situations presented in school is bound together by texts and guides, and by general agreement on concepts to be taught and skills to be demonstrated at each age and grade level. Once premises have been set and particular resources provided, craft knowledge consists of recipes for combining provisions in routine ways and for improvising in problematic situations to accomplish teachers' work, the simultaneous processes of teaching/learning and sorting students. In their work teachers provide at least two types of lessons: those of formal curriculum and those that result from everyday making do in organizational society.

## CHAPTER IX

## FOOTNOTES

1. The interaction between character and studies, or more generally, the activities that occupy one's time and engage one's energies have long been noted. Francis Bacon's familiar phrase from "Of Studies" comes from Ovid, Heroides. As used by Ovid and Bacon, mores can be construed to have a singular as well as plural meaning that denotes individual character specifically and generally social norms and accepted ways of living. We want to emphasize that the studies (content and method) are reproducers of culture and in addition a cultural product--Abeunt mores in studia, so to speak.

2. From his autobiography, Simmons (ed.), 1942.

3. Currently textbooks are adopted for a six-year period. Toward the end of the adoption period, the state reviews the adopted texts presumably on the basis of how current they are given changes in the field, as well as immediate replacement costs. At this point adoption proceedings are started to find new texts or the current text is given an extension. We are told that normally extensions are given for one or two years, but in some cases extend as long as three years. In other words, some textbooks used in Texas have an active life of nine years. The active life of texts provides for teachers stability in curriculum materials that eases instructional problems.

4. Ironically enough, one of the leaders of this effort was not a parent at all, but a former teacher.

5. For a discussion of Plan A and other programs see pp. 65-66, 138-145.

6. This is, of course, not unique for public employees. Police, for example, in urban and suburban areas most often live outside neighborhood boundaries. Technically, too, both police and teachers can be rotated from assignment to assignment, although in PHISD the tendency is to grant tenure-in-the-building to teachers.

7. While it seems obvious, we want to point out that parental input into the living curriculum and school life is greater through the conditions of their lives than through review of formal curriculum materials. For children, parental situation--social class and status, wealth, power, drive, determination, etc.--is an important context which permeates school life and affects it deeply. Where parental situations, and more collectively neighborhood situations, are consonant with and affirm school situations, teachers have a much easier time of teaching.

# CHAPTER X

# CODA

In the foregoing chapters we have examined the elements important to the organization of classrooms and the work of teachers. Now in conclusion, we draw together key themes of the report.

## PREMISES AND PROVISIONS

There is little disagreement concerning the purpose of schools: it is to teach children the basic skills and responsible attitudes they will need to carry on the national way of life. Cultural reproduction, moreover, is to be done on a mass scale largely through public schools in an equitable manner. In Prairie Heights there are no proposed alternatives to public schooling. Nor are there challenges to state formulas for funding and texts, the 185 day school year, the neighborhood school and self-contained classroom. The acceptance of these premises limits the range of possible and legitimate classroom conclusions, and equitable provision results in a sameness both in the resources made available and the elements of culture to be reproduced. Major features of classrooms are routinized, thus promoting repetitive classroom situations that make collectively shared recipe solutions possible.

## RECIPE KNOWLEDGE AND SITUATIONAL CONDUCT

In the classroom as elsewhere recipes for action are grounded in situations. Recipes will be appropriate and correct to the degree that they fit situations in which teachers find themselves. As long as the situational stream is both socially shared and consistent, teachers can develop collectively held recipes for action. Consistency in here refers not to mechanistic functioning or laws, but to situations that have typical sequences and relations within them, and by socially shared we emphasize that the situational stream and in addition the recipes for action that develop are public, collective endeavors. Premises and provisions help standardize and thus limit the situational stream which aides in creating a common experience of typical patterns. From the top positions to those at the bottom in an institution, recipes can be cited as both guides to action and justifications for action in line with institutional norms. Because recipes are situationally specific, they need not be closely reconciled, and actors implicated in situations at different organizational levels can go about their business with surprisingly little communication or discord. Good faith is justified by the repetitive nature of the situations actors must confront, the range of legitimate recipes available to them, and their desire to appear competent.

For teachers the immediate stream of situations exerts a compelling press on their lines of activity. Operating under the premise that they are in charge and in control, teachers must orient themselves to the immediate pressures in the ongoing situational stream. To keep the classroom organized and proceeding in typical fashion, teachers choose from a range of recipes that can be shown to be appropriate and expedient. The more situations that can be standardized, the easier it becomes to apply tried and true recipes for solutions. Like long-married couples, teachers in typical situations can communicate almost without redundancy: a word in the corridor, a signal through a passage serves to synchronize action and adjust recipes, if necessary, to changes in the stream. Such variation that occurs in recipes for teaching, then, occurs in response to specific situations, ordinarily within one school or even within one grade level at a school. Special student characteristics, as the most malleable and least routinized elements, are the most frequent source of variation. A single grade level, for example, can be a behavioral management problem for the teachers to adjust to for a single school year. Or as at Adobe, for example, a very large proportion of 1st grade children can enter unprepared to begin reading. That they can, in fact, enroll results from the joint operation of two accepted premises: neighborhood schools and qualification for entrance by age rather than readiness. At this point, no one examines these premises, their political and burearcratic advantages, pedagogical drawbacks, historical derivation or economic justification. Faced with 25-30 students, the majority of whom are not prepared to act appropriately in the situation, 1st grade teachers begin work on getting the children ready to accept instruction. The press of the situation compels them to adandon time honored recipes for handling slow learners, such as forming small groups or individual contracts that allow for individual instruction. Such recipes were grounded in situations where teachers have only a few students unprepared and not a majority. Beginning anew, teachers construct ways to proceed using unconventional tools, feathers and buttons for example. They establish a highly structured classroom with a great deal of teacher direction, minimal student movement and virtual silence--all elements of other recipes now thought applicable to current problems.

Although student characteristics are the most frequent source of variation, other circumstances, when sustained over periods of time long enough to make them relatively stable features of the situational stream, lead to the development of special recipe solutions. Unusual time constraints because children are bussed leads to typical and thus predictable alterations in scheduling. Classrooms with incomplete walls or moveable partitions create special conditions as elements in a unique situational stream. Norms for noise take precedence because now noise is much more publicly noticeable for example. Moreover, partitions can be opened to any desired length allowing for a single teacher to supervise two classes, for classes to move around in a larger space, for teachers to communicate with each other while still in their own rooms. All such arrangements are made situationally specific which tends to limit dispersion of recipes as well as thinking about solutions to the most localized area and situational stream possible. So isolated, the larger system is buffered from changes that would make routine situations not so routine and thus endanger taken-for-granted recipe solutions. The main contributions of central administration, then, are to provide, within the limitations of institutional premises, enough stability to allow locally crafted recipe solutions to operate and enough freedom and flexibility for teachers and principals to create them. Given these contributions, there is little liklihood that teachers will challenge the premises within which they must work.

## TEACHER CULTURE

While recognizing that every teacher, like every pupil and school, is unique, this report has focused on characteristics teachers collectively share, specifically that set of common norms and recipes for action teachers use to accomplish their work. PHISD teachers work within premises set at higher levels and made objective through provisions. They report to a school building consisting of self-contained classrooms, in which they will teach a heterogeneous group of 20-30 children, from texts supplied by the state and chosen by the district, which also designates the number of minutes each subject will be taught. Given these resources and constraints, with the understanding that teachers' responsibility is to establish and maintain a situational atmosphere conducive to transmission of the textbook curriculum to students along with appropriate attitudes and behavioral patterns, teachers collectively share recipes for getting the job done.

Some recipes are encoded in curriculum guides produced by the district; others can be found in texts used to teach teachers; many are simply carried by working teachers and used every day. These informal rules and shared recipes, interpreted in the common circumstances of teacher work, constitute teacher culture.

Teacher culture does not exist apart from the larger culture of schooling. Rather, it is contexted by it and shares important elements with the larger culture. What is specific to teachers derives from their situation, face to face six hours a day with 20-30 children. Closing classroom doors and stepping forward to address their classes at 8:40 each week day morning, teachers face their common situation. While administrators might see the teachers' task as transmitting the carefully selected knowledge and skills symbolically represented in textbooks within stringent time limits, teachers face the practical problems of using available resources to occupy the children productively for six hours and finding provisions to fit special needs of children not planned for when standard programs were designed. As frames of reference, the two definitions of task can be seen to diverge when they are stated. Importantly, however, attempts to simultaneously actualize both in a situation occurs rarely in the classroom. When it does occur, most often at meetings removed from the classroom stream, points of view can be articulated without major operative consequences. Only when a genuine crises arises, when thinking as usual no longer suffices, do divergences surface.

Similarly in setting goals, teachers and administrators seek the same ends, frequently expressed in identical language, "what is best for the children." Still, their differing situations require variant interpretation. The administrative perspective focuses on equality as sameness, standardization, and efficiency; whereas the teachers stress meeting individual needs, fairness and effectiveness. The administrative perspective has at its core the norms of schooling, while the teaching/learning process is central to teacher culture. Normally, there need be no conflict between perspectives since recipes relevant to each are situationally applied at appropriate levels in the system. Nonetheless, misunderstandings can arise if actors variously placed fail to understnad teachers' perspective and situation. School board members, for example, anxious to raise achievement scores, may not foresee that teachers, working with limited resources and children of varying knowledge, abilities and motivation, and diverse ethnic backgrounds, set goals in terms of individual achievement and will resist attempts to compare classes. Or parents, preoccupied with economic survival or determined to qualify their children for a good college, may fail, from the teachers' standpoint, to provide adequate motivation or set realistic standards for their children and worse yet, define schools as the only place where children learn and their own lives separate from the life in schools. Grounded in the stream of classroom experience, isolated from the worlds of technology and exchange, teachers are optimistic about individual outcomes within larger social arrangements they can only hope to influence in the indeterminate future.

Defining their work according to the situations in which they find themselves, setting goals they consider realistic in these circumstances, teachers mostly select, often improvise and sometimes devise recipes for getting results without unwanted consequences. Such recipes exist to solve common problems such as making the right impression (with wall displays, appropriate dress and pleasant manners with parents), handling variation among students (seatwork, grouping, contracts), managing classrooms (reward and incentive systems), and imparting knowledge and skills (lecturing, leading group discussion, enriching school fare with games, projects, fieldtrips). Asked to give guidance to a novice, university professors, Consultants, principals and experienced teachers will cite these recipes: everybody knows these are the ways to help children learn. Conversely, if these recipes have been followed, teachers have done their job; if learning has not resulted, the causes of failure must be sought elsewhere.

Central to teacher culture is a conception of teachers as professionals who perform dependably and are not in need of close supervision. Teacher culture embraces craft knowledge grounded in and validated by experience. While others may talk about rules of classroom management or effective methods of teaching, only teachers, wise in the ways of classroom life can make them work in a specific stream of situations. In addition to craft knowledge, teacher culture includes standards and ethics, but because such standards are developed out of teachers' situational stream as contexted and constrained by predetermined and taken-for-granted premises, they concern classroom matters almost exclusively. Rules cover minor, although situationally relevant, matters: it is understood that one does not use cola drinks in the classroom (particularly from the machine in the teachers' lounge) to reward student behavior although small hard candies are acceptable. There are some major rules too: for example, one does not reveal a student's IQ score, gossip about students' family situations, or isolate a child from the group for long periods. Teachers discipline members who violate standards, both those taken for granted and those agreed upon. Members who have momentarily stepped out of line usually accept the group's criticism. The presumption of legitimacy conferred by joint acceptance and enforcement of teacher culture norms sustains a basis for teacher autonomy, and conversely, failure by teachers to collectively enforce norms can bring on administrative intervention. Teacher culture becomes at once the foundation for autonomy and a constraint on autonomy--

it serves as a basis for professional standing while limiting craft practices. Partly because they take for granted the premises within which they work and use the provisions as provided, but partly too, because the pervasiveness of teacher culture and similar situational streams ensure that teachers will go about their work in predictable ways, according to legitimate recipes for action, teachers need be only superficially inspected. Texts and curriculum guides provide for vertical integration of knowledge and skills to be taught while recipes for action horizonatally integrate grade levels, allowing flexibility in each neighborhood school to respond to whatever its unique problems might be.

## SCHOOLING AND THE TEACHING/LEARNING PROCESS

The tension between teaching/learning and its extension, schooling, is as pervasive as their interdependence. Schooling exists and can in the final analysis only be legitimated by the core process of teaching/learning; that is, schooling is the organizational context in which the process of education occurs. As a form of bureaucracy, schooling works best when tasks can be standardized and routinized. Yet, because educational production involves processing and socializing people of diverse knowledge, abilities and motivations, task routinization is made more difficult. Organized with the premise that all students of a similar age will have similar knowledge, skills levels, and motivation, schooling sets the stage by providing standard resources to fit model students. Even when provisions include a range of materials, for example, a reading text series of four books each at a different level, schooling is dependent upon teacher craft to adapt those materials to student needs, and organize, manage and sustain a stream of situations conducive to learning within the schooling framework. While to some it may seem an overstatement, without the resources schooling provides, teachers could not viably do their job and without teachers doing their job, there would be no reason to sustain the current organizational form of schooling. Even though administrators are removed from the classroom, the contextual influence of schooling is ever present in the classroom.

The tension between teaching/learning and schooling appears in the intertwined strands of curriculum. On one hand, there is the goal that each individual student will reach maximal personal development and grow in knowledge; on the other, full knowledge that students are to be sorted as to their success as mastery of the formal curriculum. There is the desire that students develop high self-esteem, become self-directed and self-actualized. Yet, the classroom situation demands that students follow orders and acquire the bureaucratic skills necessary for making their way in a society of organizations that will define for them major features of their lives. For the teacher it binds instruction inextricably with management and shifts the burden of motivation progressively from pupil to teacher at higher grade levels, increasing the management component.

Mediation between the demands of central administration and teachers becomes the occupational speciality of principals, on whose skill in balancing and buffering the neighborhood schools' operation depends. Presumably at higher levels within the administrative bureaucracy, teaching/learning norms are present; after all, Superintendents and state education officials have been teachers. Even as higher officials package premises with the resources they provide to schools, the legitimacy of the educational bureaucracy rests on the belief that most days in most classrooms teachers are engaged in teaching and thus helping children learn. And while administrators are not present in classrooms, the administrative structure is. It is in the classroom that both teaching/learning with its child-centered emphasis and schooling with its emphasis on standardization are simultaneously extant. Teachers balance and weigh the strains one against the other through the use of craft recipes that enable them to organize and sustain the situational stream that characterizes classroom organization. In this stream, the performances on which the children are judged link academic achievement with organizationally adaptive behaviors. That is, the ongoing organization of classrooms reproduces a culture that is bureaucratic and individualistic, hierarchical and democratic, that values rational analysis and technically efficient solutions, but seeks them in ways that are equitable, legitimate and thus politically efficacious. The ongoing organization of classrooms both within grade levels and overtime, through grade levels situationally reflects in a form suitable for the students, the dominant tensions of the culture they reproduce.

# APPENDIX A

## DESIGN OF THE STUDY

In a broad sense the study design was comparative, enthnographic, longitudinal, and exploratory but hinged to a particular imagery of schools, specifically that schools are loosely coupled systems (see Chapter 1).[1] The imagery, however, is quite general and was borrowed from general systems analysis.[2] As a necessary first step in the testing of this perspective, we proposed to generate descriptive data on the nature and extent of internal coordination in elementary schools and its impact on classroom organization. The imagery of loose coupling suggested that, for example, the authority of office was not an organizing principle in elementary schools, that in fact no strong mechanisms link the work of people in schools, and that instruction was influenced by loose ties between neighborhood and school. However, evidence for loose coupling appears uneven, and there did not exist a great deal of comparative data about everyday life in schools in general, and especially about internal coordination.[3] Thus, we proposed to generate descriptive data from four sites over two years focusing on linkages in schools. Comparative analysis, we thought, would aid us in discovering commonalities across sites.and identify taken-for-granted understandings that serve as coupling mechanisms. Coupling was defined most generally as composed of control, communication and coordination, as virtually anything that transmitted information, orders, materials goods, etc., among sub-systems engaged in a common enterprise. In a school setting, some mechanisms are, for example, the administrative hierarchy, curriculum materials, students and teachers, meetings, newsletters, and other forms of information.

In selecting schools for study, we wanted to maximize the range of students and staff variation in PHISD, because we believed these would affect the nature of internal coordination and classroom organization. Teachers could teach singly or in groups of two or more; they could have the aid of specialists; they could teach one subject to different classes or teach the same class all day. Different ways of instructional organization were thought to effect overall classroom organization. Secondly, variation in student characteristics is believed to be a major reason why schools are structurally loose.[4] Numerous studies indicate, for example, that students' background characteristics are the strongest predictor of student achievement,[5] and that students from different social backgrounds create different problems for teachers in creating and sustaining classroom order.[6] Thus, two variables, student characteristics and staff patterns, became the basis for sampling four schools.

It is important to keep in mind that while we began with the imagery of loose coupling, we did not assume that schools were loosely coupled. Nor did we assume they were bureaucracies. We did not assume that we knew from what perspectives administrators, principals and teachers viewed their work or the nature of the organization they were a part of. We were committed to exploring their perspectives on what they did, documenting how they did their work, the problems they perceived, ways they coordinated their efforts, etc., and describing these as accurately as possible. Thus, we chose as a general method ethnography, or fieldwork, relying on direct observation and other relatively unstructured techniques which we discuss later. However, our initial questions, and our inquiry throughout the study was grounded in the collective character of schools and classrooms, in what was common about them by virtue of the fact that they were in a structured web of social relationships. This premise meant to us that schools and their components should be viewed in terms of their collective forms of social actions.

Interest in the collective nature of social action with special reference to internal coordination meant to us that we would need to study the schools over two school years to discover commonalities and phenomena whose existence we might be unaware of if the study was of short duration. In terms of coupling, studies of short duration, or more generally with the wrong time frame, might underestimate the strength of ties or their importance.[7] This seemed especially so for public schools where a great deal of coordination is accomplished through annual planning, and where student characteristics could change instructional and coordination problems individual schools face.

In the beginning of the study, then, we specified three broad sensitizing questions:

1. How does the administrative hierarcy impact on the organization of classrooms?
2. What other coupling mechanisms link classrooms to the rest of the school system?
3. How do teacher interdependence and student characteristics affect coupling mechanisms?

We were interested in the degree to which teachers did or needed to coordinate their activities with each other. What factors created and sustained couplings between teachers and the administrative structure? Even before we entered the field, however, we included additional foci drawn from existing literature on organizations in general and schools specifically.[8] We viewed schools and classrooms as open systems and attempted to list the variables that "penetrated" into them (e.g., parents). We thought that necessary linkages and couplings would be established between penetrating elements and those penetrated. We wanted to identify the frequency, length, intensity and priority of such actions. We also reasoned that the schools were resource dependent, that is, they did not independently generate all of the resources they needed to operate.[9] One of our initial concerns then, focused on the flows of resources as a way in which coordination and control were accomplished and affected classroom organization. As part of this focus, we were interested in the flow and use of instructional technologies (e.g., textbooks).

We wanted to examine classroom task structure and other aspects of management/instructional activities. We wanted to identify the patterns of grouping and determine how the work of the classroom was arranged and for what rationales. How and for what were rewards and punishments issued? Most generally, what was the rhythm and tempo of classroom situations, what was their composition? We should note, however, that data gathering efforts organized under these questions let to collection of data that did not neatly fit initial formulations. Some formulations were modified, some abandoned and some became central to our final analysis as the foregoing report demonstrates.[10]

As noted in Chapter 2, PHISD consented to make its elementary schools available for study. After discussions with the Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education, approval was granted and four schools selected to capture the range of student and staff variation in the district (descriptions of the four schools can be found in Chapter 2). Central Administration approval, however, is only one of the steps in gaining entry to classrooms. Official approval does not necessarily mean open acceptance by principals and teachers.[11]

As part of our research bargin with PHISD, we proposed to provide at the conclusion of our study workshops in each of the four schools. This would return to the school district, principals, and teachers part of the time they had given us. The idea was eagerly accepted and, we believe, eased our entry into the schools and classrooms.

Our entry into each of the study schools was subject to the building principal's approval. Three schools have a single principal, while the fourth at the time of entry had two. One unanticipated problem proved to be the number of women principals in our sample (3 of 5). Moreover, at that time in PHISD there were very few women in Principalships specifically, and administration generally. Two of the women principals expressed concern over being chosen and had difficulty believing that the study was not an evaluation of women principals, as field notes illustrate:

> As we found out today from Mrs. Tulls, there are but five women elementary school principals, and that clearly the idea of having three of the four schools in the study represented by women principals was, in Mrs. Tulls' words, "atypical". This concern on Mrs. Tulls part as to the reason why we were studying her school, in relationship to the issue of women principals, was another issue brought up. I tried to persuade her that we were not doing an evaluation of her or the school.

This principal, while not rejecting our entry, delayed it for approximately two months. Finally, discussions concerning the study occurred, and over the course of the next few months the problem was gradually allayed largely by the researchers openly discussing the proposed project with her.[12]

Access at the other three schools was virtually immediate, that is, we were reminded that before we could enter into the classrooms, we needed to have tuberculin tests! We asked all of the principals to suggest classrooms for observation, and explained that during the first year we wanted to observe at all grade levels. We believed that principal input into classroom selection would aid in developing principals' trust of the researchers. At two of the schools, after being introduced to the faculty, the researchers were allowed to arrange observation periods with teachers directly, whereas at the other two schools the principals selected who was to be observed. While, perhaps, this made the principals feel better about us, it did precipitate some mistrust of the project by teachers who wanted to know precisely why they had been chosen. The most extreme response came from one principal-assigned teacher who, when asked for an interview, replied that she wanted the questions in writing and in advance so she could prepare. Given our second year sampling plan, which is discussed later, her classroom was also in the sample. She was still concerned about why she had been chosen. Although she was no longer as structured in her relations with the researchers, she remained, it appeared to us, mistrustful of the project. At another school where researchers had been given free rein the first year, there were no problems until the second year when researchers asked for assignments to first and sixth grade classrooms. A teacher who was observed the first year was in the second year sample and immediately expressed concern as to why she had been chosen. Whereas during the first year researchers were free to come and go from her classroom as they wished, she structured the fieldworker's observation time. She indicated that if the fieldworker wanted to come in the mornings, she could do so only after 9:00 a.m. when the classroom was settled and the children ready to work. Otherwise, it would be complete chaos and the fieldworker would get the wrong impression (although fieldworkers had already observed the early morning periods in her room the previous year!). The reactions described in the two cases above, however, are extremes as teachers generally accepted our rationales for sampling.

Initially, the fieldworkers were a source of diversion for the students that necessitated somewhat more structured routines by teachers. However, as fieldworkers became "just another adult" in the classroom, students made one of two adjustments: either ignored the fieldworker's presence altogether or assumed the fieldworker was school staff. Teachers' reactions to initial field visits appeared in part responses to student reaction (e.g., a more structured lesson) and in part to wanting to impress the fieldworker. Teachers wanted us to see classes that were actively engaged in learning and that were teacher controlled. In time, however, teachers no longer responded by attempting to replicate what they thought was the ideal structure in part because they had accepted the researcher and in part because of the everyday contingencies of school life, the compelling press of responding appropriately to everyday situations. In addition, some teachers began asking fieldworkers for assistance. Not all requests for assistance were planned by researchees or school staff, but researcher reciprocity, we believe, is necessary to good field relations. One fieldworker was encouraged to go on a fieldtrip by the teachers and principal because they were in need of another adult, while another was asked to help supervise a class. We believe that such actions aided in the development of trust between teachers and researchers. Through our participation, albeit limited, we gained membership status in the setting, and teacher statements became more spontaneous and open.

Three types of data were utilized in our study: document review, interviews, and observations. We reviewed policy manuals, curriculum guides and memos as well as subscribing to the Prairie Heights newspaper which carries numerous articles about PHISD schools. Interviews of school staff took two major forms. In the initial interviews with a teacher or principal, we utilized a form of the "life history interview method. We would begin questioning by asking, for example, "how long have you been teaching," followed by questions that would allow teachers to ground their responses in their experiences generally, and specifically their experiences at the study school. We wanted to know what they saw as the major priorities of their jobs, what problems they had, etc. Another "life history" format used was to frame questions in terms of the school year. We would begin with when teachers or principals arrived in the fall and trace their activities through the school year. Secondly, we utilized a variable focused format, e.g., "I am interested in how you group your students; could you explain it to me?" This format occurred both during formalized interview periods and during informal conversational interviews. Observations were done in classrooms, at meetings, in the lounges, on the playgrounds, in the cafetorium, during PTA meetings, at open house, etc. Since we spoke with teachers and principals frequently, events we observed served as topics for discussion so we could elicit how they saw the events, what they thought about them, and so on.

During the period from October 1, 1978, to May 31, 1979, there were four staff members doing fieldwork. Assigned to each site was a primary fieldworker and a back-up fieldworker; in addition, the Project Director regularly visited each site. We believed that it was best for fieldworkers to become immersed in one site rather than four fieldworkers working all of the sites or combinations thereof. We had five rationales for this belief. First, because of a change in Project Directors and the delay that resulted it was crucial to begin intensive fieldwork in each site as quickly as possible. Secondly, it was decided that each fieldworker should get to know as much about a single site before branching out to comparative analysis.[13] Third, it seemed easier for the people being studied to become accustomed to a single fieldworker and an occasional visit by the Project Director than two or more workers; in addition, it allowed for each worker to develop rapport. Fourth, it would reduce the coordination problem within each site because only one researcher and the Director were asking questions. Finally, it would generate site specific data that would lead to hypotheses that could be checked out by workers in other sites as a kind of secondary comparative analysis.

Fieldworkers were in the field approximately 2½ days a week and spent the remaining time writing up notes, reviewing data, reading and writing.[14] As the new school year and second project year started, there were changes in the schools and our field work plan. A reduction in staff (by one fieldworker due to budget reductions) left one school not covered. Instead of sending one fieldworker to both schools atypical for the district (Carmine and Adobe), and one to both of the more typical elementaries, we decided to have one fieldworker in a typical and atypical school to provide comparative and contrasting sites. This adjustment had three effects. First, it meant essentially establishing field relations for the new fieldworker in the second year. At one elementary, for example, where in the first year the fieldworker would lunch with the teachers and share in their discussions of students and personal activities, teachers in the second year were more hesitant to establish such relations. In a few cases, there was a noticeable decline in spontaneity, but in general, teacher spontaneity was quickly regained, and the fieldworkers' presence in the schools accepted. Secondly, the adjustment in field assignments improved field relations in one school where there had been some tension between the researcher and the principal. Third, data quality and checks on quality were improved through cross-checks of observations made by two different fieldworkers and in addition the Project Director. Experiences, responses, and observations could be compared for similarities and changes over time. The desire for comparison led us to analysis of responses made to two different fieldworkers; something that would not have occurred otherwise. Such analysis, we believe, improved the quality of the data because we could pinpoint data that had consonance, where both fieldworkers (and often the Project Director) had made the same or similar observations, or elicited the same or similar interview responses.

During the first project year, we observed classrooms in all grade levels. We wanted to establish a comprehensive view of the entire organization. Observations were made to correspond with the morning and afternoon class periods for all grade levels. During the second year in the field, we decided to concentrate on the first and sixth grades. Because they represented in effect the entry point and exit point for students, we believed we would see the maximum contrast in classroom organization. Throughout the project we continued to observe at meetings and conduct interviews.

At the end of the fieldwork we had generated approximately 5,000 single spaced typed pages of observations and interviews.[15] These were kept in a chronological file for each school, and in addition, coded into categories. Assessment of data quality included analysis of the types of data we had in each category specifically, and generally in support of our conclusions. We followed procedures developed by Becker, et al., in classifying the data.[16] Statements by teachers were arrayed in terms of whether they were directed by the interviewer or volunteered, whether they were made in the company of other teachers or alone and whether they appeared to be made to the observer or made in daily conversation to others. Observational data was classified by grade and by school. For each proposition, we checked to see if we had a balance of data from each school, what exceptions might exist and the reasons for exceptions.

Analysis of coding categories, their creation, elaboration, dissolution, revealed the changes of focus that occurred during the project. For our study we identified four stages of category development:

(1) development of categories based on initial theoretical concerns (pre-fieldwork);
(2) proliferation of new categories based upon observational data and the substantive concerns of the participants. These led to review, attempts at provisional consolidation and directed inquiry for specific data in the early to middle phases of fieldwork;
(3) stablization of categories and category saturation (i.e., one has sufficient data to answer the questions raised) except for a focused search for negative instances;
(4) integration of categories in the later phases of fieldwork and during post-fieldwork analysis.

Initial concerns led to the development of coding categories in the pre-fieldwork stage. These categories centered around the "cast of characters", events, linkages between roles (e.g., teacher-student interaction), other parts of the organization, and control/coordinative activities. These represented the "first cut" at the data and were subsequently refined as we generated categories to code data on the substantive concerns of participants and key features of their organizational lives. Consolidation attempts were greatly aided through the development of "case studies" of each research site and a discussion of them by project staff. This allowed for comparisons to be made, more questions to be generated, and inquiry to be focused on specific issues.[17] Transcripts from staff meetings indicate that we were engaging in provisional model building by offering each other explanations for what we had found. This promoted a search for additional data (positive, negative, qualifying) which continued in the field until the end of actual fieldwork and carried over into post-fieldwork analysis.

Finally, since this report focuses on commonalities and the collective nature of classroom organization, we attempted to include field data that was typical of the range of responses relevant to the topic under discussion. Where data of one extreme nature or another was included, we tried to note its non-typicality and explain the reasons for its inclusion.

# APPENDIX A

## FOOTNOTES

1. For related discussions of method see Redlinger, et al, 1980 and McDonald, et al, 1980.

2. See, for example, Weick, 1976; March and Olsen, 1976; Meyer and Associates, 1978; and Bidwell, 1965.

3. See Weick, 1976; Goodlad, 1977; Clark, 1964; Lortie, 1969 and 1975; Gracey, 1972; Wolcott, 1973; and Jackson, 1968.

4. See Bidwell, 1965.

5. See, for example, Boocock, 1972.

6. Becker, 1952.

7. Glassman, 1973.

8. For a discussion of the blending of initial focused concerns and emergent issues see Redlinger, et al, 1980.

9. See, for example, White, 1974; Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978.

10. A more detailed discussion can be found in Redlinger, et al, 1980.

11. There is a plethora of literature on establishing and maintaining field relations. See, for example, McCall and Simmons, 1969; Johnson, 1975; Shaffir, et al, 1980; and Schatzman and Strauss, 1972.

12. One condition affecting her response had been contact with a previous researcher on this project who, in her mind, would not give her a clear idea of what the study was about which fueled her suspicions.

13. On this point see Glaser and Strauss, 1967.

14. During the first year each of us at different times felt "lost" for a focus. This problem stemmed in part from the extreme generality of the coupling metaphor and its multiple applications. Additionally, there was a tension between developing a "grounded theory" that naturalistically explains "what is going on" at a site and an informed (and biased) focus based in a theoretical perspective (see Redlinger, et al, 1980). Toward the end of the first year, however, as we produced descriptions of each school, a clearer focus was achieved.

15. The following section is adapted from Redlinger, et al, 1980.

16. See Becker, 1958; Becker, et al, 1961; and McCall and Simmons, 1969.

17. While conceptual development continued throughout the project, major features of the analysis were set in the second year of fieldwork. Miles has noted a similar process for another study:

> The important thing to note is that even with a starting framework, conceptual development occurred almost continuously for the first three years of the project; not until the production of case studies began in 1977 was there a firm stabilization. The process was arduous and often stressful; but increasingly productive, informed as it was by analysis of site data. (Miles, 1979:592).

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